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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XIV. No. 357 (New Series) SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1937 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE fighting in northern China has eased a little since the fall of Nanking. General Matsui talks of giving the Japanese troops a rest, while the politicians in Tokio talk of the reorganisation of the provinces under the new puppet Government in Peking. But this regime appears to be impotent. It has naturally been denounced by the National Government, now sitting at Chungking; it has no popular support locally; and the only writ that runs—and that precariously—in these provinces is the Japanese army's. Nor are the soldiers likely to enjoy much of a rest. They are on the defensive in West Hopei and Shansi; the Chinese are employing guerilla tactics with considerable effect, and Chiang Kai-shek's main armies not only hold together, but have received, according to the latest reports, a big reinforcement under his son, Chiang Ching-kuo. In the south the pressure on Canton is increasing; foreigners were warned last week-end to leave the city at a moment's notice; Japanese transports with troops from Shanghai have arrived in Bias Bay; and the gravest anxiety has naturally been felt for the safety of Hong Kong. Neither Mr. Eden's answers to questions in the House of Commons on Monday nor the full-dress debate on Tuesday went very far to allay that anxiety.

Apologies and Disagreements

Meanwhile, the diplomatic battle between Tokio and Washington on the sinking of the *Panay* is still in full blast. There is little doubt left about the facts of this incident; but conflicting statements are made on the Japanese side. The Foreign Office, after its first denials, now admits that army launches machine-gunned the *Panay* when she had been bombed from the air; the military commander at Shanghai continues to deny it. There appears, too, to be dissension among the army chiefs over the punishment of those responsible, and in particular Colonel Hashimoto, who is said to have ordered the bombing. Of apologies, of course, there has been a surfeit. But what about the "guarantees" against a repetition of outrages, which the United States and the British Governments have been so insistent upon? A good many people on both sides of the Atlantic consider that there is small chance of getting such pledges from Japan—or of her keeping them if she did give them. Senator Smathers and others are demanding that America shall throw up the sponge and withdraw her ships and men from China. Mr. Cordell Hull replies that the moment for that does not seem opportune—which is doubtless true. But while it is encouraging to know that the American Government does not believe in "extreme isolationism" and does believe in international co-operation, we should be more cheerful if we could see a prospect of this co-operation taking some effective shape.

Teruel

General Franco's long-predicted push still hangs fire. He has, in fact, made no move since the capture of Gijon a couple of months ago. Instead, the Government forces have taken the offensive on the Teruel salient. They have struck at the road and railway and communications with Burgos and Saragossa, recovered a large extent of territory, and, at length, after fierce fighting in a temperature well below zero, have taken the town itself, though rebel headquarters at Salamanca were declaring up to the last that Teruel was not really in danger. Unless there is now a sudden and complete reversal of the fortunes of war, the Government can congratulate itself on an achievement of considerable importance, from both a strategic and a psychological point of view. Its new and trained army has taken the initiative on ground of its own choice. It has occupied positions of great value to the enemy if he was preparing a drive to the Mediterranean coast, and it has upset any plans he may have been making for another attack on Madrid.

King v. Parliament in Egypt

Tempers are still high in Cairo, and a settlement of the dispute between the King of Egypt and his Government is not yet in sight. It is the old struggle for constitutionalism, which played so large a part in Fuad's reign, and which it was hoped would not be carried over into Farouk's. Farouk is only a boy, and he has neither the experience nor the cunning of his father, but he has apparently a sufficient appetite for power—or his advisers have—to put him at odds with his Prime Minister. Egypt has the forms of democracy and it is the business of Nahas Pasha and the Wafd to make the forms a reality—at any rate, as real as is possible in Egyptian conditions. They may have been, as some think, a little too brusque with the young King; but they know from experience what his old friends are, and they are particularly suspicious of Ali Maher Pasha, who has been reappointed as Chief of the Royal Cabinet. A particular point at issue is the proposal to revive a Bill, which Fuad refused to sign in 1930, and which would subject to impeachment any Minister in a minority who formed a Government without appealing to the country within a certain period. The struggle may be ended by some compromise, but it will presumably have to be on terms that will give the Government the substance and the Palace the shadow; for the Government represents the Wafd and the Wafd represents the mass of Egyptian opinion.

Broadcast Lies

The Italians have been engaged for a long time past in making mischief in the Middle East. One of their particular methods is a regular broadcast in Arabic, full of lies about British policy and aims in the Near and Middle East. This propaganda, as Mr. Noel-Baker said in the House on Monday, is "without precedent and an intolerable outrage." Mr. Eden, in reply to questions, said he had recently informed the Italian Ambassador that unless it was stopped, "it would be impossible to create the atmosphere necessary for the prosecution of successful conversations to improve our mutual relations." *Quelle politesse!* But Mussolini has apparently not been impressed; for Mr. Eden admits that the propaganda has continued as before. He would not admit that the Government were restraining the B.B.C. from disseminating "straight British news" in foreign languages, and he reminded the House that there is a broadcast in Arabic from Jerusalem. But evidently there is need for some more effective counter-measure. Several members urged that we should broadcast in Italian. Why Italian? It is not in Italy, but in the Arab world, that the damage is being done; and if the B.B.C. is to be of any service, surely Arabic is the language that should be used?

A Salutary Reminder

The German Standstill Agreement has now been renewed for yet another year—up to the beginning of 1939—with only a few minor modifications in its terms. The creditors, in effect, seem to be as far off as ever from getting their money back. Up to the advent of the Nazis, repayments were being made quite rapidly, in spite of Germany's financial difficulties; but since 1933 the needs of rearmament have swallowed up all the available foreign exchange, and the creditors have simply been told that they must wait. There are still about 1,000,000,000 Reichsmarks to be paid off; and about half the total is due to British creditors. In certain ways it is not a bad thing that the City should have this perpetual reminder of the consequences of past folly—for it is now admitted that reckless short loans to Germany played an important part in the financial crisis of 1931; and these frozen credits should at any rate make financial houses think twice before they offer Germany any further "short-term" accommodation. The Germans clearly do not intend to pay their debts till they have finished rearming (and when is that likely to be?); any fresh loans would be likely to go the way of those granted before the crisis. Moreover, Germany's barter agreements, which now cover a large portion of her short-term trade, make it more difficult than ever to use the existing credits for the financing of current transactions.

Rent Restriction

The issues raised by the Report of the Ridley Committee on Rent Restriction are so important that their examination in detail must await our next issue. The proposal of the majority is that a further measure of decontrol should operate next year, bringing the limit of rateable values subject to control down to £35 in London and Scotland, and £20 elsewhere. After that decontrol is to progress by two stages, in 1940 and 1942, subject to a sliding scale for areas with extensive overcrowding. In the worst areas decontrol will be complete by 1950. This is, indeed, a "short way with the poor!" Such sweeping measures of decontrol would spell catastrophe for a whole host of tenants. Nor can it be pretended that they are essential in order to stimulate building. What guarantees are there that over-crowding will be abated even in 1950? And are the official (admittedly low) standards of over-crowding acceptable as a test to justify decontrol of rents? The Labour members of the Committee dissent *in toto* from the majority conclusions, and two others—Sir Miles Mitchell and Mr. Graham White—append a reservation to the effect that they cannot endorse the proposed automatic time-schedule. The

whole situation, they suggest, should be surveyed afresh in five years' time.

The Effects of Rearmament

The Ministry of Labour's annual analysis of the changes of employment shows very clearly the effects of rearmament activity. Between the summers of 1936 and 1937 the numbers employed in both steel and engineering increased by 13 per cent., and those in coal-mining by 12 per cent. Shipbuilding employment rose by 16 per cent.; and it is common knowledge that the available yards are full, though there are still about 37,000 shipyard workers unemployed—for such are the effects of the domestic "rationalisation" which has been carried out. The only other industries that show comparable rates of increase are motor manufacture and the electrical engineering and equipment trades, which are still expanding fast under the influence of the grid and the housing boom of recent years. Employment in the building industry, however, has remained practically unchanged—the fall in house-building having been off-set by increased industrial building, partly due to rearmament. The distributive trades, which have absorbed more additional labour in recent years than all manufacturing industries together, have now practically ceased to expand their labour force. Regionally, the volume of employment increased between 1936 and 1937 most in Wales, which showed a rise of 13 per cent.; but there was an improvement in every area. Unemployment is still much more severe in the North and in Wales than in the South and Midlands; but the recent expansion of the heavy industries has considerably narrowed the gap.

The Shop Assistants Make Progress

The agreement recently made between the multiple shop proprietors and the Shop Assistants' Union is notable for the insistence of both parties on the necessity of statutory enforcement of minimum wages throughout the grocery and provision trades. The Shop Assistants' Union has recently succeeded in organising an appreciable section of the employees in the larger concerns; but neither the Union nor the employers' association is strong enough to secure conformity over the trades as a whole. There are many small firms, whose assistants are exceedingly difficult to organise; and the organised employers' willingness to accept a settlement by collective bargaining will be endangered unless the minimum rates laid down can be generally enforced. Accordingly both parties urge the Minister of Labour to set up at once a Trade Board with full statutory powers. Obviously, the distributive trades ought to have been brought under the Trade Boards Acts long ago. But not until the Shop Assistants' Union had at long last conducted a successful organising campaign was any attention paid to their demand for statutory regulation. We hope that the Minister of Labour will not only comply with this demand, but will as speedily as possible set up Trade Boards for other branches of the distributive trades as well.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1½d.; Canada, 1d.

CHARITY BEGINS——?

WHERE does charity begin this year? We can imagine many a warm-hearted citizen puzzled about the answer. He has given to his usual hospital, his favourite institution for children or animals, he has contributed to a fund for the distressed areas and seen to it that one or two people more impecunious and lonely than himself are specially remembered at the season of festival. He may even have recalled the famous episcopal advice and defied the laws of political economy by giving pennies to a beggar in the street. And yet he may wonder whether in a world as cruelly suffering as this it is right for his charity to end as well as to begin at home. Ought he perhaps to go further and help to relieve the terrible suffering abroad that he reads about in his morning paper?

The letter which we print this week from Mr. Vincent Duncan-Jones, who has just returned from a visit to the refugee camps in Catalonia, suggests that here, if anywhere, is an urgent need. In the relief of that need hang the lives of many helpless victims of General Franco's rebellion, and incidentally the chance of seeing to it that thousands of young men and women nearing maturity will not be prevented by weakness and disease from playing their share in rebuilding Spain on the wreckage of civil war. It is not a hopelessly great demand; it is a possible proposition with organisation improving and the prospect of adequate food supplies once again in the spring.

The Labour movement showed in its great rally in the Albert Hall last Sunday that it was ready to respond to this appeal. But it is an appeal that transcends political party and which can, indeed, only be opposed by those who dared to advance arguments against saving the Basque children from death. The first of these arguments amounts to saying that those in Spain not reconciled to General Franco are better dead, because they must be Communists or religious fanatics accustomed to burning down churches, massacring priests and violating nuns. The second argument is that Franco is winning anyhow, that it is a mistake for Britain to do anything to antagonise the coming ruler of Spain, whom the British Government has already half-recognised and has given a conditional promise to recognise in the future. Propaganda of this type has been put about with great energy in the last few weeks, and it is noticeable that the *Times*, which used to include a reasonable presentation of the Government's case, as well as that of Franco, has now apparently thrown to the winds any attempt at impartiality. Last week it published an article by Wing-Cdr. James, which refers to the destruction of Guernica by the Reds (though it was the *Times's* own correspondent on the spot who provided conclusive evidence of what actually occurred there) and which makes assertions about recent military events in Spain which could be precisely refuted by any journalist who was present in Spain at the time. Most significant of all is the fact that the *Times* has not printed any letters replying to these statements, even when those letters were mildly and authoritatively expressed.

One of the peculiarities of the propaganda on the religious issue has been the difficulty which those who have organised it have found in obtaining the adherence of

any but known pro-Fascists. Sir Henry Lunn and some of his friends have attempted to form a "united Christian front" against the "Communist" government of Spain. It was typical of this group that Mr. Angus Watson, who was somewhat mysteriously announced as being associated with this "front" at the beginning, withdrew his name almost as soon as it appeared, and that one of the front's first efforts to represent Franco as the tolerant saviour of Christianity drew a dignified and authoritative reproof from the Archbishop of York and from other influential Anglican and Free Church clergy. The fact is that when honest people examine the charge of Communism and anti-religion brought against the Spanish government, they discover, first, that the Government is not Communist, and secondly, that they have been asked to confuse anti-clericalism with opposition to Christianity. They learn, too, that most of the atrocity stories about priests and nuns have been invented, and that those excesses which did occur (and which were put down as early as possible by the Spanish Government) arose not from Communism, but from the age-long hatred of the Spanish Church which has the most terrible history of cruelty and intolerance in Europe. The doctrines of Karl Marx have nothing to do with recurrent popular risings against the Church in Spain; some of the worst took place in 1836, before Marx was heard of. Anti-clericalism in Spain indeed is the inevitable result of the close relationship between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the economic and spiritual degradation of the masses in Spain.

Anti-clericalism is no attack on Christianity; on the contrary it is the belated appearance of that spiritual impulse that gave most of Europe the Reformation. The struggle for tolerance, for the right of the individual to think or speak freely, for the writer to express himself and the scientist to disperse superstition, is a struggle which has involved some measure of violence in every country. Liberty has never gained more than a precarious victory in Spain until the last decade. It is because the Liberal republic of 1931 gave some promise of permanence that the Vatican, afraid of losing the one stronghold where its domination was still unquestioned, has to share the blame of plotting this civil war. We who won our victory over clericalism centuries ago forget that in Spain the Inquisition burned its last victim as recently as 1780, and was still able to put liberal leaders to the torture in the early nineteenth century. We forget, too, that there have been many attempts to form a liberal regime in Spain during the last 100 years, and that they have always hitherto been defeated by the armed alliance of the Church, the landlords and the army. Usually these military and clerical *coups d'état* have succeeded with comparative ease; they have not succeeded on this occasion in spite of Fascist aid, because they have met with resistance not only from a small political middle-class and intelligentsia, but also from the great mass of Spanish people, at last aroused to defend their liberty.

The second argument that Franco will win anyhow and that it does not much matter if he does, is equally fallacious. Until a few weeks ago it was put about that Franco's great offensive was soon going to finish off the war. That argument has been abandoned; it is now obvious that Franco is having great difficulty behind his own lines, is on bad terms with his allies, and is in no case to mobilise that great superiority of men and material that would be necessary to bring him victory in the field of battle. On the contrary, the Government is taking the initiative. The British supporters of Spanish Fascism have tried another tack. Franco has advanced a claim to have established a blockade of the Spanish coast, for which in fact there seems no evidence of any kind. Apparently deceived by this specious claim, the British Admiralty issues warnings about "mines"—mines which, we suggest, are as elusive as those which were used to deter British ships from taking help to the beleaguered Basques during the siege of Bilbao. Doubtful of British co-operation and deterred by the threat of rising insurance rates, foreign ships are discouraged from trading with Valencia and Barcelona.

Our information is that to-day there is no blockade of the Spanish coast by Franco, but that there is real danger that these rumours may lessen the number of ships reaching Government Spain and so greatly increase the hunger and misery of the Catalonian refugees whose condition Mr. Duncan-Jones describes. In last week's issue of this journal we referred in specific terms to the attitude of the Admiralty and the nature of this blockade. The question has also been raised in the House of Commons. Apparently as a result, the Admiralty have now issued an extraordinarily involved statement which, when carefully analysed, seems to mean that their recent warning about mines off the Spanish coast was unjustified. We hope it is now understood that there is no blockade.

In these circumstances, let no one argue that Britain has "no concern" in the Spanish struggle. Even if the Government were able to deceive itself that a Fascist victory in Spain does not menace British communications in the Mediterranean, can it or anyone else pretend that French democracy would not be gravely threatened by a Fascist Spain? Indeed, as the *Times* and the Government are so fond of telling us on other issues, this is not a question of party politics, but of that whole tradition of liberty for which Britain has the reputation of caring, and for which it has on many occasions in the past rendered effective help on the Continent. Those who want to respond to the appeal for help in Spain have not to envisage, as our pro-Fascists suggest, a gang of wild and dangerous Revolutionaries, but to contemplate the miseries of tens of thousands of peaceful and industrious citizens whose only crime was to be loyal to their elected Government, and whose punishment for resisting the foreign invader is to leave their homes and mourn their dead in exile.

Behind the superficial complications which cloud every issue in wartime the choice in Spain is simple. It is a battle fought with modern weapons and with international aid given to each side, but it is just the same battle which we in England fought over centuries, and only occasionally with bloodshed, against clerical, military and aristocratic tyranny. The fact is that this tyranny is reinforced and complicated by the admixture of German and Italian Fascism does not alter and certainly does improve its essential character. Of all the atrocities of which the newspapers are now full there is no atrocity so great as that of deliberately plunging a country into civil war. To relieve the victims of that war is not only humanitarian, it is also politically intelligent. In 1937, we venture to urge, charity begins in Spain.

PATENT QUACKERY

THERE is one section of British industry—the manufacture of patent medicines—which fortune has favoured beyond its deserts. Over 23 years ago a Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to investigate this trade, came to the conclusion that the looseness of the law permitted gross exploitation of the public. Advised by the Director of Public Prosecutions that the difficulties in the way of sustaining a charge of false pretences against a vendor of patent medicines were almost insuperable, the Committee nevertheless found on the market "many secret remedies making grossly exaggerated claims of efficacy; causing injury by leading sick persons to delay in securing medical treatment; professing to cure diseases incurable by medication; or essentially and deliberately fraudulent." The Committee emphasised the urgent need for stringent, protective legislation, but its Report was issued on August 4th, 1914. *De minimis non curat Mars.* The social crusade against commercialised medicinal quackery was submerged in the thunder of the world war.

Since then nothing has been done to remedy matters. A Bill based on the findings of the 1914 Report obtained a second reading in the Lords in 1920, but perished for lack of Parliamentary facilities. Similar Bills introduced in 1931 and 1936 were still-born. No Government has acted, no private Member's measure has been given time. It is as though a powerful vested interest has paralysed Parliament. And now, in 1937, the vendors of patent medicines have once again enjoyed a stroke of luck. In February of this year another Select Committee, charged this time with the task of reviewing the Medicine Stamp Duties, presented a Report which included a strong hint that control of the industry, rather than mere modification of its taxes, was desirable. Pleading lack of Parliamentary time, Mr. Chamberlain omitted to deal with the question in the current Budget. In the storm of controversy aroused by the National Defence Contribution—Mars once more coming to the rescue of the bogus Aesculapius—the omission attracted little attention. Unless he is moved by pressure of public opinion, there seems little chance of Sir John Simon's making amends for his predecessor's inaction.

Yet the trade in patent medicines flourishes as vigorously as it did before the war. The Select Committee reporting last February, suggested that the annual expenditure on proprietary medicines in this country now lies between the limits of £20,000,000 and £28,000,000—the great bulk of which, from the purchasers' standpoint, it at best sheer waste. Notwithstanding the great extension of public health services, a large section of the public appears to be as gullible as ever, and on their gullibility a powerful and well-organised industry has been built up, whose ability to influence the press is indicated by the fact that it spends over £2,500,000 a year in display advertising in the daily press alone. Many of its more deleterious products, such as the host of dubiously effective means for procuring abortion sold euphemistically as Female Pills in little shops in mean streets and the still more questionable aphrodisiacs purchasable as tonics, do not obtain advertising space in reputable newspapers. But censorship is not over-rigidly applied. In two consecutive issues of a popular daily chosen at random this month advertisements appeared of patent medicines (excluding all "health foodstuffs" of the Bengers, Bourn-Vita, Horlicks type) which claimed to cure the following human ills—the figures in brackets representing different advertisers making a similar claim:

Rheumatism (6)	Common Cold (6)	Stomach Pains (4)
Lumbago (3)	Abscesses (3)	Boils (3)
Eczema (2)	Chilblains (2)	Coughs (2)
Influenza (2)	Nervous Debility (2)	Headache (2)
Polypus	Piles	Asthma
Bronchitis	Urinary Diseases	Constipation
Sciatica	Impetigo	Ulcers
Acne	Sore Throat	Varicose Veins
Indigestion	Blood Troubles	Liver Complaints
Kidney Diseases	Anaemia	Poisoned Wounds
Prostatitis	Neuritis	Bladder Diseases
Adiposity	Heart Disease	Rheumatoid Arthritis

Pecunia non olet. Perhaps not; but the proprietors of this journal, who have a certain reputation for idealism, must be well aware that the advertised claims for which, as publishers, they shoulder some moral responsibility, represent in the main a fraud on the public. If their defence takes the line, as well it may, of replying that their newspaper must live in the face of competition and that their competitors do not refuse this revenue, the case for action by the State is strengthened.

What form should that action take? Not by the fiscal weapon alone can this social evil be eradicated. Admittedly, the incidence of existing duties is anomalous. Under the operative Acts dating from 1802 to 1812, all preparations are dutiable which are secret, or proprietary, or held out as beneficial for the prevention, cure or relief of any human ailment—provided that they are to be used "as medicines or medicaments." This proviso exempts a large range of toilet preparations (toothpaste "good for the gums," etc.) and the whole list of foodstuffs and beverages whose advertisements claim incidentally ("Are you suffering from Night Starvation?") remedial properties. Furthermore, in the sphere of medicines proper, preparations escape duty if they make no use of an ailment name; e.g., Backache Pills pay tax, Back and Kidney Pills do not. Finally, duty cannot be levied on "single," as opposed to compound, drugs sold under no matter what fancy name; and exemptions have been successfully claimed, under a judgment given in 1903, for all drugs which constitute "known, admitted and approved remedies." Through these loopholes nearly 80 per cent. of the trade to-day in patent medicines escapes duty-free.

The 1937 Select Committee, whose terms of reference were intended to confine them to the fiscal field, recommended that these loopholes should be closed, and that all proprietary preparations—including medicines, toilet stuffs, medicated wines and confectionery—should be liable to duties on a scale graduated according to the price of the article, with exemptions only in the case of drugs sold exclusively to doctors and dentists or dispensed by chemists as part of a doctor's prescription. From the fiscal point of view the recommendations have much in their favour. But, from the aspect of social welfare, it is immaterial whether or not a 16 per cent. *ad valorem* duty is chargeable on Ovaltine, Hall's Wine, Pepsodent and Listerine. For better or worse it would be a sumptuary tax on the consumption of proprietary products irrespective of their merits from the angle of health or hygiene. The bogus and misleadingly advertised medicine which now dodges the tax-collector would doubtless be roped in, but its vendors would still reap a rich harvest of profit from the exploitation of human credulity.

Nothing beyond revenue is to be gained by taxing foodstuffs which claim to be "nourishing" (does not Guinness make the same pretensions?) nor on levying a duty on mouth-washes or preparations like Eno's Fruit Salts whose claims to aid dental hygiene and relieve accidental constipation or "hang-over" are, by general consent, defensible. Nor is there a valid case for endeavouring to restrict by penal taxation the sales of the numerous, perfectly honest, standardised preparations which are sold—with no exaggerated claims—by Boots' and other manufacturing chemists under branded titles. The problem of the worthless specific advertised in such a way as to exploit the fears and gullibility of the ignorant would be untouched.

The suggestion has been made that all proprietary medicines should have to carry a clear statement of their chemical composition. This might have deterred some purchasers from buying, as a cure for typhus, diphtheria and small-pox, a bottled fraud which the 1914 Committee found to consist of peppermint plus a little dilute nitric acid; but it would not protect the section of the public whose credulity is most grossly exploited. A further possible step would be to impose drastic taxation—of the order of 500 per cent.—on all press or poster advertising of patent medicines; but, apart from difficulties that might arise in the collection of such a duty, the objection would remain that no distinction could readily be made between the

sheep and the goats. The honest household remedy would be penalised no less than the nefarious bolus.

The one solution that seems practicable is that which the Select Committee in 1914 recommended and the Committee of 1937 re-endorsed. A department of the Ministry of Health should be established with wide powers to control the manufacture and sale of patent medicines. All vendors should be compelled to register their products with that Department and reveal their constituents. The sale of any unregistered product should be made illegal, and no advertisement should be permissible whose text has not been passed by the Department as a reasonable assertion of what the product may be expected medicinally to achieve. A great extension of bureaucratic control over private enterprise? I can see no other alternative, little enamoured as I am of bureaucracy as such. All of us have known cases in which reliance on fraudulent patent medicines has led to needless suffering and misery. Many years ago, when I was a little boy, the kindest and most genial of my adult friends was the station-master of a rail-cum-steamer terminal on the Firth of Clyde. Falstaffian in girth, he feared that the District Agent did not like to have "men about him" who were fat. An anti-adiposity medicine, now happily gone out of business, killed him in two months. I shall never forget his face, haggard and frightened, as he lay dying on Christmas Day. AYLMER VALLANCE

A LONDON DIARY

A TOY-MAKER'S advertisement which caught my eye this week at first sight took me aback. Deferred purchase terms, I read, could be arranged. The idea of Santa Claus coming down the chimney with a pocketful of hire purchase agreements ready for signature did not appeal to my sense of Christmas fun; nor did I like the idea of nurseries being initiated into the mysteries of one of the less socially beneficial branches of the credit system. At a second glance, however, I realised that the advertisement related not to teddy bears or bricks, but to one of the beautiful scale models of a locomotive which male parents, if they can afford it, buy as much for their own amusement as that of son and heir. In the case of this sort of toy *de luxe* it is doubtless as legitimate to spread the purchase price over the year as it is in the case of a new motor car. The advertisement, however, made me wonder how much the nation spends every year on toys—an expenditure of which over two-thirds, I am told, falls in November and December—and in what direction children's preferences are running to-day. With the assistance of a colleague whose curiosity led him to make sample inquiries in London shops and in the toy-making industry, I have arrived at the following conclusions—all, let me add, subject to a slight margin of statistical error. But then, who wants to reduce Christmas stockings to a precise index figure?

* * *

Roughly speaking, it appears, we spend about £4,000,000 a year on toys, of which imports account for £1,500,000 and home-produced articles about £2,500,000. Including £500,000 worth of exports, the annual production of the British toy industry amounts to at least £3,000,000, or a good deal more if allowance is made for oddments turned out for Christmas by "one man" firms whose operations escape the notice of the census of production. Somewhat to my surprise I learn that, so far as British output is concerned, dolls form a tiny proportion—barely 3 per cent.—of the total. Imports of dolls from France, Italy and Czechoslovakia are considerable; but, even so, the doll no longer seems to hold its old place in the nursery. Whether this is an indirect reflection of birth-control complexes among parents I do not know; but readers of "This England" extracts, with their frequent emphasis on the Englishman as animal-lover, will not be surprised to find that production of stuffed dogs, cats, bears and other beasts reaches the high figure of £300,000—three times the British output of dolls. Consumers' demand—if that be the right word to apply to Christmas stockings—is concentrated largely on metal toys. The mechanical variety accounts for £400,000, the non-mechanical (mainly Meccano and other constructional toys) for £650,000, while nearly £500,000 is spent on toy cycles, scooters and such-like. Indoor games and wooden toys are estimated at £350,000 in each case. Are there signs of returning war mentality in the nursery? Only, I am told, in relation to mechanical toys. The lead soldier has not retained, or regained, his pre-war appeal. National uniforms, it may be, are too much alike; or is it that the infantryman, dying in a field of shell-torn, gas-poisoned mud, is no longer a romantic figure even to children's eyes? But the mechanical tank and, above all, the aeroplane are sure winners, and so are guns hauled by clockwork tractors. I begin to see the psychological appeal in a current recruiting poster: "Come on, lad! Join the Army and get mechanised, too."

* * *

One of the most interesting results of the revival of pamphleteering to-day is "Left Review's" *Authors Take Sides on the Spanish War* (Price, 6*d*.). The question asked was: "Are you for or against the legal government and the people of Republican Spain? Are you for or against Franco and Fascism?" The simplest answer would have been (1) "For," (2) "Against," and the two-line answers of many practical writers (e.g., Leonard Woolf) approximate to this. Otherwise they fall into five groups: (1) Militant (e.g., Calder Marshall), (2) Liberal-Individualist and Anti-Fascist (e.g., Nevinson, Helen Waddell), (3) Neutral Pacifist or "Plague on both your houses" type (Eliot), (4) Pro-Franco (Evelyn Waugh, Geoffrey Moss, etc.), and (5) Eccentric (Shaw, Pound). The first group was much the largest, and included the younger or more political writers, the second and third some of the best writers or those who had experience of the last war. The remaining groups are much smaller. Wells has probably been put in the wrong one. Lady Eleanor Smith defends Franco with an argument unworthy of a better cause. THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is in some degree divided with W. J. Turner as neutral, Garnett, Mortimer, Sackville West as liberal anti-fascist, Howard, Connolly and Pritchett more pronounced. Irrespective of their opinions, one can spot the best writers by their avoidance of clichés. The answers of Calder Marshall, Chalmers Mitchell, Garnett, Huxley, Meynell, Mortimer, Pollitt, Postgate, Connolly, Spender, Shaw, Norman Douglas and V. Sackville-West seem more alive than the others. Gerald Bullett, Norman Collins, Margaret Cole, C. Day Lewis are none of them sufficiently wary of phrases about the "toiling masses," "dark forces," "ruthless domination," "tragic hour," "men of good will," "major disaster," "merciless campaign" and "return to barbarism." It is a pity that there is no full list of the writers who were not asked, or whose answers were not printed. Wyndham Lewis, Isherwood, Massingham, Nicolson, Yeats, Forster, Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Bowen, George Orwell, Bertrand Russell, Osbert Sitwell and Max Beerbohm are people whose opinions are not negligible and would not be badly written. The pamphlet, however, is generally representative, and it is remarkable to see how completely a hundred and twenty writers are in agreement about the rights and wrongs of Spain, and, what is more significant, about the necessity of putting that agreement into action.

* * *

The regret I expressed last week that Koestler's account of his imprisonment should come out in a form that gave it a political stamp was not, as one correspondent imagined, a flick at the Left Book Club. My point was that a Left Book has a wide sale primarily as a pamphlet, and I thought Koestler's "Dialogue with Death" would lose some of its chance of being appreciated for its permanent, as distinct from its topical, quality. No, I have the liveliest respect for the Left Book Club and I take this opportunity of saying that I think a good deal of the criticism levelled at it is just the natural jealousy of people who are accustomed to seeing their own admirable books selling 1,000 copies or so, and who now see their rivals

comfortably hitting off the 50,000 sale mark. If you look at the twelve main books of the month for 1937—the only ones, by the way, for which Laski and Strachey are jointly responsible with Gollancz—you will find that they are in fact a remarkable selection; they include Koestler's *Spanish Testament*, Hannington's *Distressed Areas*, and Webb's *Soviet Democracy*, Snow's magnificent *Red Star over China*, Spender's *Forward for Liberalism*, Orwell's *Road to Wigan Pier*, and Huberman's *Man's Worldly Goods*. A good list. It is also a pleasant novelty to have a few "Left" authors decently paid for their work. The other remarkable aspect of the Left Book Club is that it has become a potentially very important political organisation—an organisation capable, by the way, of calling an Albert Hall meeting and finding that it has to book the Queen's Hall for an overflow. A record, I think.

* * *

Few good books can afford to cost 17*s.* 6*d.* Therefore I was not surprised to hear that Lowes Dickinson's *International Anarchy* (the title itself has become so much a commonplace that people have forgotten its origin) sold only a thousand copies at its first appearance, and I am delighted to see that Messrs. Allen and Unwin have produced a new edition in a very attractive form at the comparatively cheap cost of 7*s.* 6*d.* It is far the most readable, accurate and illuminating of books on pre-war diplomacy. A friend writes to tell me that reading it ten years ago while still at school was a turning point in his whole mental development; it first roused his interest in international politics and it has given direction to his thinking ever since. Sir Arthur Salter rightly remarks in the Preface that he contributes to the new edition that the book, which "deserves to be both a classic and a best seller," is so sound that "all the new information in our possession has only added further detail, without changing the main outline and design." And it remains true that whatever we may say about economic, psychological and other underlying causes of war, they are all summarised in the phrase "anarchy" and that all remedies boil down to international government.

* * *

A friend who one night this week had some hours to wait for a train connection in a Scottish town tells me the following odd but authentic incident. He supped at the hotel in the market square, and later, entering a small bar which opened, not into the street, but off the lounge, asked for a whisky and soda. It was "gone time," he was told; the bar was closed except for residents in the hotel. But—the kindly disposed barmaid added—since he had eaten in the hotel and it was a snowy night, the proprietor (with the tacit blessing, apparently, of the police) sanctioned a compromise. He might have his whisky and soda if he would take it and consume it in the "Gents." One of the oddest offshoots of Puritanism I have come across. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. L. J. Huddy.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

MOTHER-TO-BE

My baby is expected in three months, and my size is considered small. Can I affect growth by taking raspberry leaf tea?—Mrs. H. (Essex).—*Woman's Pictorial.*

I felt yesterday that the situation in the Far East could not be as ugly as it seems. For only the previous evening I encountered Mr. Duff Cooper, the First Lord of the Admiralty, at the Leicester Square Cinema.—*Daily Mail.*

These books (of the Bible) were written over a long period of time It took God longer to write the Bible than it has taken Him to build the British Empire.—*Modern Evangelism*, by William C. Macdonald.

Those pylons that carry the Grid System's electricity have upset, among others, the Rev. C. S. Richardson. He thinks they are ugly, dislikes the thought of having them erected all over the Lake District. "I suggest an alternative," he says. "Could not pylons be made to look like trees?"—*Daily Mail.*

General Sir Walter Kirke, addressing the 6th (Bermondsey) Battalion of the Queen's Royal Regiment at their annual prize-giving, said that the prevailing spirit of the Territorial Army represented not only a patriotic revival but a great spiritual revival. "It is well," said the General, "that this aspect should be stressed, as it is being done in one command, by the institution of prayers every morning before proceeding to the day's work in camp."—*Manchester Guardian.*

Whether or not, actually, the original Hercules was a vegetarian, who can tell?—*Vegetarian News.*

With the help of Christmas puddings, the Oxford University Pacifist Association are seeking to induce kinder feelings between the opposing factions in Spain. A pudding and a letter have been sent to General Franco, c/o the Duke of Alba and Berwick. The letters read: "In view of the approaching season of good will we are sending to you a Christmas pudding as a token of our sincere wishes that Spain's troubles may speedily be ended in a spirit fitting to that season."—*Liverpool Echo.*

The Royal physicians borrowed apparatus from the Institute with which to treat King George, but, thinking that "artificial sunlight" was too common a term to apply to Royal treatment, they invented the term "ray therapy."—*Scotsman.*

Mr. S. H. Hart (Reading) said that proposals for the destruction of foreign starlings did not go far enough; it was impossible to differentiate between foreign and native bred birds: what was needed was the extermination of starlings generally.—*Farmer and Stock-Breeder.*

DRINKING BABY. So like a real baby—this life-like, very solid all-rubber doll really drinks its bottle and wets its nappie, which of course must be changed after each feed.—*Abbatt's Toy Catalogue.*

I have made a close study of National Socialism, and have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the most remarkable ethical movements the world has ever seen.—A. P. Laurie in *Peace News.*

Few people undertake their Christmas shopping in such a business-like way as the Princess Royal. As is her practice on these occasions, she carried with her a list of presents to buy, and crossed them off one after the other with a silver pencil.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Weston-Super-Mare seemed to me the nearest setting to Galilee.—Statement of an itinerant preacher interviewed by the *Daily Express.*

CHIANG KAI SHEK'S CHOICE

[This article, by a correspondent now in Northern China, was written before the fall of Shanghai and Nanking. Recent events only serve to emphasise its conclusions.—ED. N.S. & N.]

THE old capital of China is again under the heel of the conqueror. The "little men," as the Chinese call them, guard every railway station from the borders of Manchukuo to Shantung, from the Gulf of Pechili to the caravan routes of Inner Mongolia. Their armies have spread in a great fan-shaped movement whose extremes are the Yellow and the Amur rivers; this is the area which it is intended to dominate in the name of self-defence. All is done by control of the air and railways, the hinterland is left to take care of itself. In Peking the shops are open and trams and buses are running as usual, but the city gates close from dusk to dawn and it is still unsafe to go into the Western Hills, a few miles from the city. The strategic situation explains the marked contrast between Japanese policy in Tientsin or Peking and the surrounding country. In the big cities there has been no ill-treatment of

the population and every effort is made to make things appear normal, but in the villages and such towns as Paotingfu thousands of innocent peasants have been shot on the suspicion that they were plain clothes "volunteers." The further the "thin red line" stretches from its base the greater the dependence on terrorisation as a method of control.

How did the Japanese take the North so easily? Partly, of course, because it was already theirs to a large extent. In 1935 Doihara had secured the establishment of a Political Council for this area, and had compelled all central government troops to retire from Hopei province. Plans for the severing of five provinces failed. No Chinese, both capable and willing to govern the area could be found, and the attempted *coup d'état* in Tokio of February, 1936, encouraged China to resist. There was also conflict between the methods of Doihara and his superiors. But the military situation remained favourable to Japan: her troops were so stationed that she was in virtual control of the northern railway system, not including the important junction near Wanping, but taking in the line from Peking to Inner Mongolia. The army of Sung Cheh Yuan lay in scattered units over the whole province of Hopei. The Japanese, therefore, expected little resistance. One of the last of the purely provincial armies, General Sung's troops knew little of modern methods of warfare, their chief duties being to maintain order and ensure the collection of taxes. It was known that Nanking intended to reorganise Sung's forces and this in itself was a factor contributing to the conflict. The final guarantee of easy victory, to the Japanese, lay in the character of General Sung himself. With badly equipped and badly trained troops, with no air force and no artillery things would still have been difficult if Sung had been a brilliant strategist and leader of men. As it was, Sung had no more military knowledge or diplomatic finesse than a sergeant; he knew nothing of staff work and had no plan of campaign. Small wonder then that the Japanese made no large scale military preparations for what they expected to be no more serious than a *coup d'état*.

China's decision to resist came not from her leaders but from the common soldiers and junior officers. Without them the train of events would have been very different. The incident at Wanping followed the usual plan. It was to force General Sung's hand, by completing Japanese control of the railway system in the north, and pave the way, as they now admit, for the establishment of a new government in North China, within about ten days of the incident. The day after Wanping, Nanking ordered Sung to retire to Paotingfu with his army and let the Japanese make the next move. Sung, feeling that he could not trust Nanking but that he could deal with the Japanese, refused. On July 27th he signed an agreement with the Japanese agreeing to all their terms, but he reckoned without his own men. On the same day his own troops fired on the Japanese at Fengtai and Lanfang; China celebrated a victory for one day but by the afternoon of the 28th Sung knew the real situation and fled from Peiping in the early hours of the 29th leaving his army to remove the defences thrown up to defend the city and retire as best it could. Peking awaited the heavy guns and tanks of the invader behind closed doors and shuttered shops: only dogs were in the streets. But outside the city the common soldiers again took things into their own hands and small groups threw away their lives in a vain attempt to stem the tide. There were small triumphs in the hills around Peking, but Chinese resistance did not become organised again until the Japanese reached the Nankou pass and Paotingfu. A junior officer was sent to take Nankou in three days with four thousand troops; it took two divisions two weeks. The retreating Chinese blew up eight locomotives in the railway tunnel but did not damage it seriously. In any case, the collapse of resistance in Inner Mongolia made it pointless to defend Nankou and the fall of Paotingfu pressed the Chinese armies back to Shansi.

Resistance in the north roused the south. Once the fighting had started the situation passed out of the control of the government in Nanking, which was still reluctant to take the initiative. Again it was the common soldier who started the conflagration. The two Japanese who were driving into the Hungjao aerodrome were shot in the back; they had given no more offence than usual and were doing nothing outside their customary practice. The soldiers who shot them undoubtedly expressed the will of the nation to resist. The Japanese military, who believe that any sign of weakness merely encourages the Chinese, and who were already extremely sensitive about the loss of face involved in the withdrawal of their nationals from Hangkow, were compelled by their own premises to take action. So began the attempt to paralyse the very centre of Chinese nationalism and military resistance.

Why did the common soldier force his country into this struggle? It is not easy to know his mind, but it is possible to estimate the factors which created the situation and some of which must have influenced him. It is clear that Japan was determined, this year, to complete her control over the North China provinces; the only question to be settled was whether China would or would not resist. It is possible to argue that the loss of North China is not irreparable and that the course of wisdom would have been to let it go for the present; there is evidence that Nanking would have preferred this to war, at least for another three years, during which its military preparations were to be completed. On economic and possibly strategic grounds there is much to be said for this view. Yet, although public opinion has narrow limits in China, it is patent that no government, in 1937, could refuse to fight and still survive. The problem, therefore, is to explain why this was true in 1937 and not in 1935. What had changed public opinion, why had it grown in depth and extent, what had happened to the internal balance of forces? Why had resistance to the Japanese, even at the cost of national extinction, become the general will of all articulate classes?

It is clearly difficult for any government to survive years of constant humiliation and retreat and retain the confidence of its people, however wise its policies may be. Nor was Nanking in the position, from the international point of view, to indulge in violent denunciations of the enemy or advertise the preparations which it was making against the day when it would turn at bay. So, naturally, a widespread distrust of Nanking officialdom and Chiang Kai Shek himself grew up. In these conditions the policy of the United Front against Japan, promulgated by the Communists, fell on fertile soil. But without the incident at Sian it is doubtful whether the nation would have been aroused to such a pitch of national fervour. The Communists, by persuading the younger officers of the futility of civil war, were in an indirect way responsible for the detention of Chiang Kai Shek when he came to Sian for the purpose of putting more vigour into the war. By intervening after the detention they were directly responsible for his release, without conditions; nothing could have impressed a soldier more than to be captured by enemies of ten years standing and be set free. Under these circumstances, it was impossible to continue the civil war; the argument of the Communists that the nation should unite against Japan became unanswerable and their prediction that war was imminent was justified by the facts. By putting the national struggle first and leaving all social questions to be settled later, the Communists made it possible for the bulk of Chinese public opinion to be sympathetic to their case.

Japan watched with growing concern the changing situation in China since the Sian incident. There is no shadow of a doubt that the mood of self-confidence and pride in national strength and unity was invigorating even the northern provinces and that, given another three years, Chiang Kai Shek's military preparations would be formidable enough to change the balance of power between the two countries. Only those who have watched the slow growth of Chinese unity and sympathised with it can feel the tragedy of the present conflict or appreciate the urgency of a united front against this modern form of barbarism. But the tragedy exists because, at least in the North, promises rather than facts are being destroyed;

the North is equipped neither morally nor materially to fight its own battles. They must be fought by the central and southern provinces. But even there the spirit of nationalism must not be exaggerated, for the Chinese are fighting with professional mercenary armies not conscript levies. The government is not, like the Communists, in favour of arming the people. If, however, Chiang Kai Shek's crack divisions are broken, the problem arises of whether to fall back on popular resistance and appeal to the U.S.S.R. or to attempt a compromise with Japan. Hence Japan's concern about the United Front in China. Having acute agrarian problems of her own Japan cannot afford to allow China to postpone the settlement of hers, and the Communists gave leadership to agrarian distress, by putting the national issue first. The conflict in her policy is that the measures she takes to prevent China from moving to the Left are those best calculated to force her in that direction. The threat of Japanese aggression forced Chiang Kai Shek to come to terms with the Chinese Soviets; the present conflict is likely to put him into a position where an appeal to the U.S.S.R. may be the best way out.

It is easy to demonstrate that General Chiang will be forced to the Left, but it is difficult to predict who would follow him. And could he lead the Left? The Communists consider that the only way to win this war is to arm the people and harass the Japanese lines of communication. If China's national armies are defeated in Shanghai there are three possible lines of development. General Chiang could attempt to compromise with Japan and if the terms were reasonable he could hold his government together. In this case those who refused to compromise would join the Communists and the international war become a civil war, an outcome desired by the Japanese but one which they are not likely to achieve because their terms, unless modified by the Powers, will be too harsh. The second course is for the Nanking Government to throw in its lot with the people by organising mass resistance and appealing to the U.S.S.R. for help. Cut off from Shanghai and Nanking the influence on the government of the Chinese bourgeoisie and the foreign Powers would be at a minimum. Whether Chiang Kai Shek could lead this movement is another question; as he would most likely be superseded by other leaders if this course were followed it will not appeal to him, though he may be forced to take it. The third course is perhaps the most likely. That is, the emergence in central and western China of a military agrarian state on the model of Kuangsi province, a totalitarian nucleus in which all economic activities would be under direct military control and direction. General Pai Tsung Hsi might be associated with General Chiang in such a venture. If this state were to include the southern provinces its economic strength would be considerable as Canton would take the place of Shanghai. If not, the new state would lack the economic resources to menace the invader. It cannot be long now before General Chiang will be forced to make his choice.

SMALL TALK

LOOKING for something to read, I caught sight of *Society Small Talk, or What to Say and When to Say It*, by a Member of the Aristocracy. I opened it at the chapter of advice on "Dinner-Table Talk" and came on the passage:

> After a little discussion on the comprehensiveness of the *menu*, the lady says, with a view to discovering whether her companion is of the silent order of diner-out or not, "Some people do not appear inclined to eat and talk at the same time, the few observations they make merely coming in between the courses."
>
> "He must be a dull fellow who cannot contrive to do both, with satisfaction to his fair neighbour if not to himself," is the style of answer in the one case, or in the other it might be—
>
> "I hope you won't think me a bear if I own to a predilection for doing one thing at a time."

As I read this, I could not help wondering which of the two answers I should have given, if I had been so addressed by a mid-Victorian lady at a mid-Victorian table. "He must be a dull fellow" has a touch of gallantry about it, but he must have been a very dull fellow indeed to put it that way. As for "I own to a predilection," the other fellow might almost as well have said to his fair neighbour: "Shut up, and let me get on with the food."

Whenever I read a book about the art of conversation I am always struck by the fact that, with so many things to talk about, human beings find it extraordinarily difficult to talk about them. It is as though men were struck dumb, especially when women are present. The world is seething with topics, from the fall of Adam to the fall of the franc; yet a strong, silent, square-shouldered man racks his brains in vain to find a single remark to make to a woman to whom he has just been introduced and whose name he caught as a mere mumble. One feels at such times that human beings, being naturally inarticulate, ought to be taught to talk, like parrots. Indeed, in present circumstances, a hostess might be well advised to surround her dinner-table half with human beings and half with parrots. The parrots would at least keep up a chatter and would talk just as brilliantly as the guests sometimes talk in the books of etiquette.

One of the chief difficulties in human conversation is, of course, the fact that you are forbidden to say so many of the things that it is on the tip of your tongue to say. Thus, when your hostess says, "How do you do?" you are not permitted to return the only natural answer. In a society run on natural lines, "How do you do?" would be a first-class conversational opening. You would immediately plunge into a description of your symptoms, explain to your hostess that a single fried egg at breakfast acted on you like a poison, that your doctor had forbidden you stewed fruits because of a tendency to gout and had advised the use of cayenne pepper as a substitute for ordinary pepper on the ground that it is curative. Such a conversation once begun, would go on swimmingly. Your hostess, her eyes brightening, would tell you at length how much she had benefited from the Hay diet, how she was able to sleep so much better since she had given up coffee after dinner, and ask you whether you had ever tried yaghourt. Nothing more pleasant could be imagined; but the Member of the Aristocracy who wrote *Society Small Talk* would have been deeply shocked if you had attempted to set the conversational ball rolling in this way. She warned her readers:

> This formula of "How do you do?" should be answered with the formula of "How do you do?" It is actually as much a simultaneous salutation as a bow, and is simultaneously expressed; to answer this greeting of "How do you do?" with "Pretty well, thank you," or "I have not been very well lately," or "Quite well, thank you, I hope you are quite well," or the like references to health, would be trite, tiresome and out of place.

And she added the injunction: "The expression, 'How do you do?' should be uttered lightly and smoothly, neither of the words being in any way accented."

How many a dinner-party has been frozen at the source as a result of this unnatural taboo on returning a simple answer to a simple question!

I cannot myself help thinking that men and women would be much happier talking about their health than insulting each other about their respective appetites, as the guests at a luncheon-party do in a model conversation in *Society Small Talk*:

> "Will you have some of this *salmi* of duck?" says a hostess hospitably to one of the gentlemen.
>
> "It is too good for me," is the quiet rejoinder; "I never eat luncheon as a rule. I think meat once a day is quite sufficient for any man, and I confess it astonishes me what some of you ladies can do."

At this, "those ladies who have just received a good help of roast beef, roast lamb, or a tempting cutlet with attendant vegetables, and who are unequal to defending their position, with heightened colour, and feeling slightly indignant, continue eating in silence," till one of the brighter spirits among them makes a riposte with an onslaught on men because of the "substantial" breakfasts they eat. Then the company is at its ease, and the conversation scintillates.

"Light banter" is warmly recommended by the Member of the Aristocracy as a form of small talk. It is especially useful in the ballroom and on the lips of "those men who have a recognised reputation for this style of persiflage":

> Personal attire and the ornaments worn provoke much light banter in the ballroom in this wise: "I envy that butterfly perched so daintily on your hair close to that shell-like ear. What secrets could I not whisper were I so near. Happy butterfly!" The rejoinder might be made in the same spirit of fun: "The butterfly is not so happy as you think; I shut it up in a velvet case when I go home for fear of losing it. Now, one could not shut you up, and you would not like it even if one could."

We are not told what the rejoinder to this should be, but certainly those Victorian guides knew how to talk.

Take, for example, the profound conversation about laughter between B. and Mrs. A. Mrs. A. has been observing "how few people there are who have a really agreeable laugh":

> B.: "Very few, as you say. A boisterous and noisy laugh is odious; there is no heartiness in such mirth; in fact, it is a misnomer to call it so."
>
> Mrs. A.: "I dislike a society laugh almost as much; a sort of forced laugh with a hollow ring in it."
>
> B.: "It is the kind of laugh one most often hears, though; it is ready for all occasions; it is polite, conciliatory, complimentary, and conventional; and is never objectionable as is the boisterous guffaw."
>
> Mrs. A.: "To me there is a ring of sadness about the stereotyped laugh, the effort of will rather than the offspring of joy, pleasure or appreciation."

Is there any conversation like that nowadays? I doubt whether you would hear anything approaching it, even in Bloomsbury. Yet the mid-Victorians looked on it simply as small talk. I wonder what they talked like when the conversation took a serious turn.

Another example of Victorian small talk is put in the mouth of a young man whose fair neighbour banters him for not being a ladies' man and suggests that he is "a blighted being, suffering from unrequited affection, and so on." He replies:

> "I am afraid not; I should be an interesting study to you if I were, perhaps; but I am not a sufferer from the tender passion, though I do not altogether disbelieve in it. How can I when the best fellow I ever met died, I am told, from its effects the other day? How far it was love, and how far it was lungs, no one seemed to know. I conclude it was the one reacting upon the other, the illness caused by the lungs, and the depression caused by the love, and that the two combined were too much for him."

This reply of the young man was undoubtedly tantamount to a rebuff, but on how high a level he kept the conversation! As the author of *Society Small Talk* says, however, "mental exertion is as necessary in the art of conversing as in the exercise or practice of any other art."

It is only at tea-time, indeed, that the thing becomes easy. "At five o'clock teas and afternoon parties, the babble of talk runs high." And there is a good reason for this. "The crowning point of ease and satisfaction to both men and women at these afternoon teas is the knowledge that at any moment they can beat a retreat, should they find that they are getting out of their depth, or that their conversational powers are not equal to the occasion, or that they have exerted them to the utmost, or that they are not getting on particularly well, or that they are feeling rather bored, or that they 'have had enough of it,' as they term it." That is the grand distinction between a tea-party and a dinner-party. Even the bravest man would not have the courage to rise from the dinner-table after the fish-course and say good-bye to his hostess merely because he was not getting on particularly well with the woman on his right or was feeling rather bored. If men and women knew that they could escape from dinner-parties in this way, how much more cheerful they would be at dinner-parties! It is only at tea, however, that human beings are elated by the knowledge that, if the worst comes to the worst, they have a sure and speedy line of retreat. "A sure escape thus ready to hand," says a Member of the Aristocracy, "gives, or imparts, an assurance and confidence, unknown at other social gatherings, where the hours of arrival and departure are more strictly defined."

It is a melancholy reflection that human beings apparently find so much difficulty in talking and yet are so eager to talk. Why should we not be content to eat in silence like the other animals? Why should I be conscious of failure because the woman beside me and myself are so much interested in the lobster that we are eating that we can think of nothing to say to each other? Why should I be expected to reply to her vapid: "Been to any shows lately?" when I am slowly counting the thirty-two chews that I am trying to give to a mouthful of chicken? The only possible answer is that it has always been so, and that since the beginning of civilisation, it has been one of the highest ambitions of man to be a successful talker of small talk. Even I have felt it. To be able to indulge in the banter of the ballroom—to say: "I envy that butterfly perched so daintily close to that shell-like ear!" Never in this world, alas! Perhaps, in Paradise. Y. Y.

Correspondence

RELIEF FOR SPAIN

SIR,—In an ill-lit stone-floored dormitory in a former monastery at Figueras, Catalonia, a group of five young British people stood surrounded by Spanish children. As a delegation from a Youth movement, which had recently raised over a hundred thousand tins of milk for refugees, we had gone out to see for ourselves what things were like.

Here in this first home that we visited, only half an hour from the French frontier, we found over two hundred refugees, who had had no bread for 14 days, who were totally without milk, were living on beans and rice, with sometimes some dried cod that was going bad. There had been no soap for five months. There was no heating, and the clothes and blankets were miserable in quality. The tuberculosis rate had recently risen from 25 per cent. to 30 per cent., and was still rising steadily.

That is one side of the picture of the way in which perhaps a million mothers and children are living in Eastern Spain. In that same home we asked the children whether they would sing for us, and after a little persuasion they did—Republican songs, *No Pasarán*, the International and so on. The vigour and spirit which they put into it was amazing. That is the other side of the picture—the amazing solidarity, conviction and high spirit of the people throughout Eastern Spain, who are living, one and all, on the edge of starvation.

In the short seven days of our tour, we visited ten refugee homes and seven hospitals or institutions. Everywhere, except in the more inaccessible parts of the mountains, we found a similar shortage of milk and other foods and medical supplies and of adequate clothing.

I recall a wonderful maternity hospital, on the hills outside Barcelona, splendidly appointed with fine modern equipment and methods, where pregnant and nursing mothers were getting two hundred grammes of milk in the morning and two hundred grammes in the evening.

The horror of these conditions is intensified by the continuing war on civilians from the air. They bombed Barcelona just before we got in, again while we were there, and again just after we left. At Lerida we saw two great communal graves ready dug in case of new bombardments.

This situation means that Spain's future, the children who are going to build a new Spain, are being the worst affected. That is why I feel that a special appeal to help them should be made at Christmas—the children's festival.

Most critical days are ahead; I do most earnestly hope that readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION who have given so generously to so many causes in the past, will be able to give again to this. Indeed, the cause is so urgent, the position so serious, that I would suggest that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION itself issues an appeal in its own name, thus giving the weight of its authority and influence. The situation *can* be relieved if we act quickly and on a large enough scale. VINCENT DUNCAN JONES

British Youth Peace Assembly,
15a Grosvenor Crescent,
London, S.W.1.

[This letter is referred to in our leading article this week. We shall be happy to receive, send on and acknowledge all sums that readers care to send for Spanish relief.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE VULNERABILITY OF JAPAN

SIR,—It seems extraordinary that at the very moment when even the Conservative press recognises that China is far from being defeated, and when the Japanese are at a loss how to proceed because the expected surrender of the Chinese Government has not occurred, THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION should say that it is " too late to save China " because Japan has " now the substance of victory achieved and the resources of China in her hands." The argument that Japan would now " pay far less attention to the threat to deprive her of raw materials and to cut off her trade " is based on fundamentally false assumptions. North China is, it is true, rich in raw materials, but it will take years to develop those resources, and Japan cannot even undertake their development without foreign financial and material assistance. The notion that the armed occupation of large parts of China can immediately solve Japan's raw material and market problem is absurd.

It is not true that " the British Government now lacks the means of helping China or of adequately protecting its own nationals." On the contrary Japan is now far more, not less, vulnerable to economic sanctions than four months ago. Her reserves of war material are used up, or nearly so, she has depleted her gold reserves, cannot get credit and is experiencing more and more difficulty in buying for cash—all without having annihilated the Chinese armies or caused the Chinese Government to surrender or to lose its control over the greater part of China. China cannot give Japan oil, and such oil supplies as Japan has bought for future needs are mainly stored abroad.

The fate of 400 million Chinese is not of less importance than the future of Spain, and the issue in the Far East is no nearer being settled than in Spain; it is most certainly not yet too late. The Chinese armies have not been defeated and have shown the most splendid fighting qualities; they were not trapped in Nanking; the authority of Chiang Kai-shek's Government has survived the loss of the capital, and even the *Times* admits that in the North the Japanese armies are on the defensive. Indeed, the *Times* and THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION appear to have changed places during the past two weeks in their estimates of the situation. The Japanese aim has been to tell the world that China is defeated and her Government without authority as soon as they could take Nanking; is it necessary for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION to say it for them?

The Japanese gambled on surrender and the break up of China. They have not got either the man power or the economic strength to continue the war for months and months against a united China set on resistance, whilst at the same time trying to hold down the Chinese population in the territories taken by their armies and in Manchuria. Indeed, there are rumours that Japan is of necessity keeping some of her best troops in Manchuria. FREDA UTLEY

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[We expressed our own doubts last week about Japan's ultimate capacity to hold the very large slice of China which her armies have overrun. But it seems unrealistic to pretend that the Chinese armies have not for the time been defeated or that Japan would throw up the sponge in the day of victory because Britain and the U.S.A. imposed economic sanctions. Financial pressure and such action as that of the dockers in refusing to handle Japanese goods increase Japan's difficulties and are all to the good. But it is no use deceiving ourselves into thinking that Britain and the U.S.A. are prepared for the risk of war against Japan, or that China could now be saved—we meant from the horrors of war—if the Powers did now, for their own interests, run the risks they refused to run for China and for peace.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

NEW ZEALAND'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT

SIR,—I wonder why, in the published accounts of the achievements of the Labour Government of New Zealand no mention is ever made of its handling of the Samoan problem? In my opinion the courageous and enlightened action of the N.Z. Labour Government on this issue is outstanding, and ought to be included in any record of its accomplishments.

The excellence of the article in the current issue of your journal is marred by its omission of all reference to the Samoan issue, which is the less excusable because so few people in this country know anything about it, and it is exceedingly important that they should, especially seeing that the treatment of backward peoples constitutes one of the major problems of the world to-day.

In 1920 New Zealand received a Mandate over Western Samoa, and to its shame exercised a brutal rule over these islands, in which policy our representative, the Governor-General, took a prominent part. To that policy the New Zealand Socialists persistently objected, and when they came to power proved their sincerity by immediately sending to Samoa a mission of inquiry to see what needed to be done to remove the grievances of the inhabitants. Promptly on the mission's return the Government granted all the Samoans' requests and, to their eternal credit, much more, since when the happiest relations have existed between the Samoans and the Government.

All the facts relating to our (for we were deeply involved) discreditable dealings with the Samoans are on record, but up to the present the German and other Continental peoples are much more cognisant of them than are the people of this country. Incidentally, in their struggle for justice and liberty we owe to the Samoans one of the finest examples of self-control, moral courage and non-violent resistance to persistent persecution over a period of many years to be found in the annals of history.

12 Victoria Avenue, WILFRED WELLOCK
Quinton, Birmingham.

MILK FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

SIR,—I must again draw the attention of your readers to the lamentable position which is created by the Board of Education's regulations regarding free milk and meals for schoolchildren. However poor the family, the children cannot receive these unless they have been certified by the Medical Officer of Health as suffering from subnormal nutrition. It is common knowledge that many authorities manage to cut the red tape and feed the children that they consider necessitous, but not all authorities have the courage to do this. As a result many children who ought to have meals or milk are deprived of them. A wife of a farm worker with eight children under fourteen asks how she can afford to pay 2*s*. 6*d*. a week for her two children who go to a school some distance away and cannot get home for the midday meal and have been refused free meals and milk. She writes that, after she has paid for coals 3*s*. 6*d*., oil 1*s*., newspapers and children's clubs 1*s*., milk 1*s*. 9*d*., she has left (out of 32*s*.) the sum of 24*s*. 9*d*. to find food, boots and clothes for ten. The Board of Education talks about physical fitness and then insists that children should show definite signs of physical unfitness before they can be given a dinner or a drink of milk at school.

Cambridge. CLARA D. RACKHAM

THE CHURCH AND SEX

SIR,—May I add a word to the subject of the obscurantism of the church in matters of sex? It seems hopeless to expect any progressive policy on their part in such questions of abortion, divorce, etc., when they have not even got so far as to allow their followers the acquisition of the commonplace facts of the normal sex life.

I live in a large industrial town in the North of England. I was gratified to find that two clergymen of my acquaintance (of different denominations and unknown to each other) asked me on their own accord to supply them with a short descriptive essay on the facts of sex which they could give their parishioners who, as they found, were so often in need of enlightenment on this subject.

In both cases a little pamphlet was worked out conjointly with the clergyman on the most simple scientific and moral lines to be printed and distributed to individual parishioners when the need should arise. In both cases the plan fell through, though the clergymen concerned felt that such instruction was a crying need in their parishes. The pamphlet did not get the imprimatur of the higher clerical authorities.

It only proves that the lower clergy are often more enlightened than their superiors. MEDICUS

SIR,—Presbyter Anglicanus's letter in your issue of December 18th, calling upon Church people " to demand that the whole subject of sex should be re-explored in the light of science and related to the highest ethic we know," is a rare example of that combination of faith with acceptance of scientific truth which distinguishes religion from religiosity. Unhappily the latter has almost driven the former out of the Churches. Referring to the predominant obscurantism, the writer says: " The work of, for example, Dr. Havelock Ellis might never have taken place."

It is impertinent to point out that not only do the obscurantists of whom Presbyter Anglicanus complains ignore Ellis's great work, but that for forty years they succeeded by means of the legal condemnation of 1897 in so restricting its circulation as to greatly curtail and delay its effects. Last year for the first time Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* was openly published in this

country and its vital information and luminous wisdom is still only available for those who can afford to pay four guineas. Hardly a lending library will stock it.

Nor have things improved in the legal sphere. In 1935 Edward Charles's scientific study *The Sexual Impulse* was similarly condemned in spite of the fact that sixteen expert witnesses of repute went into the witness box to testify to its scientific, educational, and social value. There is room for legitimate difference of opinion on the value of Charles's work. But what is there to be said for a law which places any book with a sexual content at the mercy of magistrates who, however "learned" in law, appear to glory in their ignorance of science and of literature?

A letter on Darwin in the same issue of your journal prompts me to ask what would have been the state of knowledge of natural history in this country at the end of the last century if the Bishops who considered *The Origin of Species* a work of the devil in 1859 had been able to restrict its publication to small sections of the privileged classes. ALEC CRAIG

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

SIR,—I withdraw my accusation that you have not read the Insurable Employments report, and substitute another—that you have read it superficially. Here is the reason for the differentiation that you are able to explain only by social influence. It appears from the evidence that hospitals and non-residential colleges recruit their staffs, mainly through employment exchanges, from workers who alternatively seek *insured* employment in hotels, restaurants, etc., while residential schools and colleges draw mainly upon the domestic servant class who alternatively seek *non-insurable* employment in private service. It is desirable, other things being equal, to avoid anomalies such as arise, for instance, when workers go in and out of insurable employment while continuing to perform the same type of work. It seemed to the Statutory Committee that by drawing the boundary of insurance in the way suggested, such anomalies were likely to be minimised. MARY STOCKS

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London, W.8.

BRITISH LIBERTY

SIR,—There was a time when the name of England could be used in defence of liberty outside her shores. England allowed freedom of speech and assembly; England was orderly and progressive; therefore freedom of speech and assembly were conditions of good government. The logic, on many an occasion, was simple and effective. These days are gone. Your readers may be interested to know that the name of England is now being used by Fascists in Montreal to justify their violation of elementary civil liberties. A clerical-fascist movement is making great progress amongst French Canadians in Quebec at the moment, and recently the Mayor of Montreal, in answer to a request from organised bands of students from the *Université de Montreal*, prohibited the holding of two public meetings, because, in his opinion, they were "communist." One was to be addressed by Alfred Costes, a Communist deputy from France, the other, under the auspices of the Friends of the Soviet Union, by General Yakhontoff, the well-known publicist and lecturer. When some protest was made at this arbitrary action the Mayor pointed out that England censored Hemingway's film on Spain "without giving reasons" and argued that when England was prohibiting films and stopping parades in the streets by executive authority there was no reason why anyone should complain at his modest behaviour. Thus the decline of liberty in England is not merely an English phenomenon; it has weakened immensely the cause of democracy in places which have been accustomed to look to England for leadership. F. R. SCOTT

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LABOUR'S HISTORY

SIR,—May we draw the attention of your readers who are interested in working-class and socialist history to the serious problem which faces those responsible for the library of the Labour Research Department?

This library, based on collections initiated by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, enriched by the industry of G. D. H. Cole, and sustained by the enthusiasm and generosity of Trade Union and other working-class zealots over the past twenty-five years, contains what is undoubtedly a unique collection of periodicals, books and miscellaneous documents relating to the organised activities of the working class during this crucial quarter-century. The collection comprises the journals of established Trade Unions, the ephemeral (but historically significant) leaflets of war-time and other proletarian organisations, the rule books and other records of labour bodies which form the indispensable basis for the day-to-day research conducted by the Department, and will be invaluable material for the working-class historian of the future.

Those who had the good fortune to visit the exhibition of working-class literature held in London by Collet's Bookshop in the summer of this year will have seen a selection of the material and will immediately realise its value to the economic historian and to the working-class movement.

These materials lie in the Labour Research Department's files in rich but inglorious profusion. Both space and labour for their proper arrangement are lacking. Worse still, part of the limited accommodation available is damp, and the documents are deteriorating visibly. What is needed is a sum of money to pay for their proper organisation, the construction of shelving, the provision of heating and lighting in the remoter parts of the premises, and the codification and indexing of the material. The cost cannot be much less than £100. Contributions are urgently invited. They should be addressed to the Secretary of the Labour Research Department at 60 Doughty Street, W.C.1.

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Miscellany

"OLD SHERRY"

Two years after its first performance the treasurer of Drury Lane subjoined to his accounts of the year 1779 this note: "*The School for Scandal* damped the new pieces." In 1937 it can hardly do that! Still, it may be that I shall not get more pleasure out of any new comedy this winter than out of this hardy old perennial, as interpreted at the Queens Theatre by Mr. Gielgud's company. For one thing, it is a treat to some of us to hear unbroken English spoken on the stage; to listen to actors not only finishing their sentences, but expressing their thoughts and sentiments with brilliant precision; to be reminded that, after all, articulateness is a human excellence, and that dialogue which requires elocution as well as mimicry in an actor, brings out a delightful side of his art which modern comedy so seldom exercises.

I suppose I must have seen at least half a dozen performances of *The School for Scandal*, and this one was, I think, on the whole, the most enjoyable. It had defects, it has been excelled at points repeatedly, but the "keeping" was so satisfactory throughout. (That is a term of eighteenth-century art-criticism which ought to be revived; it is the best substitute for that useful German word, *stimmung*.) Like most good comedies *The School for Scandal* has a moral; but while in inferior comedy the story invariably reminds us of the moral, here it is forgotten in the story, and becomes just a spice which adds a flavour now and then. To perform *The School for Scandal* with due heed to this is the secret of a satisfactory production: gaiety must swamp sententiousness in it. If it does not, no accomplished exhibition of confusion on the part of Lady Teazle when the screen falls; no virtuosity in her subsequent display of indignation and contrition; no animated agitations, however convincing, in Sir Peter; no elegant effrontery in Joseph or airy recklessness in Charles (however skilfully depicted) can make up for that defect. The performance at the Queens Theatre was a success because it was animated by this essential playfulness, and because the actors (as they should in a play with "asides") acted their parts with that awareness of *our* enjoyment of their own absurdities and adversities which makes us sharers in the fun of portraying

them. In this respect I especially admired Mr. Gielgud's playing of that amusingly self-conscious hypocrite, Joseph; also, Mr. Leon Quatermaine when, as Sir Peter (in purple dressing-gown and night-cap), he glumly took the audience into his confidence. You remember the speech beginning, "'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since"? Ah; that was a lovely little bit of elocution! But the technical point I want to stress is this: once an actor has thus stepped out of the frame, though he presently goes back into it he cannot be naively believed in again. And if he understands the nature of artificial comedy he will not want to be *completely* believed in. The delicacy, the wit, the fun of his performance will lie henceforth in portraying the character he impersonates with a gay suggestion that he is well aware that *we* are in the secret, and that besides being Sir Peter, or Joseph Surface, he is *an actor* relishing thoroughly himself the tribulations and absurdities of those preposterous people. To get that across is the triumph of the actor or actress in artificial comedy, which is itself a delicious game of make-believe in which actors and audience are *collaborators*.

We live in a matter-of-fact age that makes everything doubly difficult for the artist. We don't seem able to judge art, especially the art of the stage, except in terms of reality. And that is one reason why our acting is going down-hill. The hybrid descent of Sheridan's comedy is a commonplace of criticism. *The School for Scandal*, if it were a race-horse, could be described as out of Congreve by Fielding. It is a cross between the frankly heartless husband-baiting comedy of the Restoration and the sentimental, virtue-admiring comedy which *Tom Jones* made popular. Sheridan was a first-rate craftsman. The join between a "modern head" and "antique trunk" of his play is not so obvious as it was in poor Mrs. Evergreen's neck on which, you remember, the coterie of Lady Sneerwell's drawing-room commented unkindly. But it is visible, and the art of producing *The School for Scanda* is to conceal it as much as possible. The test of how well this is done is the famous screen-scene. If that moment is painful and Charles' mockery seems caddish, then the balance of the play has been all wrong. Lady Teazle must of course hang her head in shame, but commiseration for Sir Peter must be swamped in laughter, and her sudden right-about in the direction of virtue must not be taken seriously. I looked up G. B. S.'s old article on *The School for Scandal*. What had jarred on him was not Charles' laughter, but her refusal ("without the least misgiving on the part of the dramatist") to back up Joseph's plausible explanation of her presence in his house: "When a married woman comes into a man's rooms with the deliberate intention of enjoying a little gallantry, and, on being caught, pleads for sympathy and forgiveness as an innocent young creature misled and seduced by a villain, she strikes a blow at the very foundations of immorality." Suppose, he went on to ask, Joseph had taken her line and declared after her explanation: "No, it is false, every word. My slumbering conscience awakens; and I return to the path of truth and duty. Your wife, Sir Peter, is an abandoned woman who came here to tempt me from the path of honour," what should we have thought of him? G. B. S. concluded that *The School for Scandal* dates on the Woman Question. Of course it does. But that is neither here nor there. If the play is well produced such a reflection ought not to occur to the spectator, though I admit that were it performed by angels it would probably occur to Bernard Shaw.

At the Queen's Theatre the screen-scene was rather underplayed; I think from a caution which perhaps was prudent. Miss Peggy Ashcroft avoided giving that exhibition of shamed confusion which other actresses have seized as a great opportunity by turning her back to the audience, and her repudiation of Joseph's excuses was sincerely pretty rather than passionate, while Charles' rollicking taunting merriment was reduced to a minimum.

Miss Ashcroft is a winning Lady Teazle, but I have seen better. Miss Angela Baddeley in 1929, if my memory serves me well, succeeded better in bringing out the *twin* aspects of that stage-character—the high-spirited natural girl who plays with zest, as a part within a part, and with surprising ability, the role of the fine lady of comedy. Lady Teazle has to be a provincial beauty whose high spirits and mischievous love of flippancy enabled her to shine in London society, though she had first caught her rich elderly husband by an apparent, though really enforced, love of humdrum domesticity. Miss Peggy Ashcroft was sweet and natural, but I missed in her the genuine flippancy and sparkle which enabled Lady Teazle to shine in Lady Sneerwell's set and made her take to "the extravagant fopperies of fashion." Where, too, was the irate foot-stamp of the delicious little snob, really ruffled at last, when her husband reminds her of the days when she was "content to ride double behind the butler on a dock'd coach-horse"? And there is another point. I am sure that when Sheridan chose the name of Teazle, what he had in mind was that his heroine was going to be above all a born "tease"; one in whom the art of tantalising men and of changing their exasperation into adoration and back into irritation, was a natal gift. In the teasing scenes with her elderly husband Miss Ashcroft betrayed few traces of that unkind but life-enhancing gift. Nor did she *flirt* enough with Joseph. Joseph would never have been caught against his self-interest had there not been more of "love-me-if-you-dare" in Lady Teazle that Miss Ashcroft showed. And that reminds me of the one defect in Mr. Gielgud's otherwise fine impersonation of Joseph. In the seduction scene with Lady Teazle, he lacked gaiety. What he brought out admirably was that Joseph is not only a hypocrite but a completely self-conscious hypocrite (hardly ever to be found in real life), who delights like an artist in his own hypocrisy. That is the main point of the part and he hit it splendidly. But in his relation with Lady Teazle his solemn ironic relish of his fine "sentiments" and their success, should give place to a gay irresponsibility. Take, for example, that delightfully witty passage when he is trying to persuade her to become his mistress:

> LADY T.: Indeed?—so that if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.
>
> JOSEPH S.: Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you—and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.
>
> LADY T.: To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence—
>
> JOSEPH S.: Ah! my dear madam, there is the great mistake: 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinions?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions?—why, the consciousness of your innocence.
>
> LADY T.: 'Tis very true!
>
> JOSEPH S.: Now my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.
>
> LADY T.: Do you think so?
>
> JOSEPH S.: Oh! I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for, in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Here Mr. Gielgud acted and spoke too much as though he were conducting a serious argument. Lady Teazle, one remembers, is suspicious of him and his intentions towards Maria. It is the gaiety of these witty sophistications, not only the spice of literal truth in them, that inspires in her that feeling of laughing freedom which persuades her to take the final step. Joseph at that moment is irresistible, not because he reasons well, but because he is frivolous. And we, too, would enjoy the scene more if Mr. Gielgud betrayed a little more (in the manner, say, of Oscar Wilde) his own enjoyment of the fun of his devasting plausibilities. Just a little more lightness here, please, Mr. Gielgud. As a spectacle, too, the performance at the Queen's Theatre is exhilarating. The "Motley" colour schemes are gay and light and charming. They invariably make an excellent *background* to the actors. The costumes are rich, fanciful and fine; though in one or

two instances (Sir Benjamin Backbite, for example), they are over-fantastic. The silvery, discrete magnificence of Joseph Surface is, however, a triumph of the dresser's art, supporting —if not inspiring—Mr. Gielgud's cold collected grace and polished purturbation. The sententiousness of the play is admirably relieved by the light comic-opera close of it. True, one misses Lady Teazle's rueful epilogue :

> I, who was late so volatile and gay,
> Like a trade wind must now blow all one way,
> Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
> To one dull rusty weather cock—my Spouse !

Still, the spirit of that epilogue is preserved and that is what I mean by the production being so thoroughly in " keeping."

DESMOND MACCARTHY

THE MOVIES

" Marie Walewska." At the Empire.
" Amphitryon." At the Curzon (from Monday).
" The March of a Nation." At the Carlton (from Monday).
Disney Season. At the Tatler.

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER, with an unwonted burst of modesty, beg us not to expect historical accuracy in the new Garbo, but to make due allowance for the claims of Romance. In fact, *Marie Walewska* violates history considerably less than any other historical film I can think of off-hand. What divergencies there are are unimportant, and certainly will not trouble the general public, for whom Napoleon's Polish mistress is an obscure figure. (She does not appear in the current *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—a curious omission). Up to a point her story makes ideal Hollywood material : her surrender to Napoleon, prompted only by patriotism, was really something of a Hollywood gesture. When he first singles her out (in a Polish ball-room to which M-G-M have done full justice) she detests the ignoble, conceited, unscrupulous little Emperor ; at this stage we are sure she would have applauded the Duke's famous " Boney was no gentleman." She melts only at the discovery that Boney is an idealist ; once he has outlined to her his scheme of a peaceful, united Europe, they post with some dexterity to the adulterous sheets. Does he really believe in this intelligent anticipation of the League of Nations, or does he regard it as an indispensable preamble to the alcove ? No matter which, it works : within a few months they are fast lovers ; and conferences take place at remote castles, to the perplexity of Talleyrand (an amusing sketch by Reginald Owen). The domestic idyll is disturbed by Napoleon's dynastic marriage to Marie Louise, and still more by Marie's discovery that he has lost whatever youthful idealism he possessed. She visits him on Elba, and the final shot shows her waving farewell to the departing *Bellerophon*.

It is a good vessel for Garbo's grace, pathos and distinction ; though not one of her very best films, all Garbolaters (I am one) will want to see it. Her playing increases steadily in ease and fluidity, and more notable than ever is her ability to give a strange touch of poetry to the simplest phrase. Then her treatment of the dialogue is lighter and gayer than usual ; an early scene, in which her brother Paul (Leif Erickson) chases her round the room and even pulls her hair, seems to have had the effect of loosening her up nicely at the start. The film as a whole has life and movement—it opens with a stirring scene of Cossacks raiding the Walewski palace and leaping on horseback over the Walewski grand piano ; in dramatic conflict and climax it is a little lacking. Charles Boyer has the difficult task of standing up to the glamorous Swede on the one hand and the little Corsican on the other. He acquits himself admirably, achieving a good likeness, and disentangling with some skill the various strands of a character which, under Clarence Brown's direction, has been allowed to remain complex. But he is much handicapped by his strong French accent, which rings disconcertingly amid the surrounding cries of M'ree This and M'ree That, to say nothing of an occasional Mahry.

The Curzon presents an amusing satire at the expense of antiquity, based (as I imagine, though the programme does not say so) upon Jean Giraudoux's play. The verse is witty (not so the translated titles), the music charmingly empty and frivolous ; while Henry Garat is unexpectedly brilliant in the double role of the warrior Amphitryon and the *opéra-bouffe* Jupiter who attempts to cuckold him by assuming his form. There are a few poor " anachronistic " jokes, and a great many good ones : none better than the virulent Juno of that delicious comédienne Marguerite Moreno. *The March of a Nation* is one of those panoramas of the opening-up of the West which America dumps upon us every now and then. We start in the forties, watch Joel McCrea, energetic employee of a stage and express company, wrestle with epic difficulties and finally attain white-haired recognition. That slow-speaking humorist Mr. Bob Burns delights, but the whole obviously makes better entertainment in America than here.

Those who regard Christmas as primarily an opportunity to catch up on the Disneys they have missed during the year, may like to know which ones are being shown next week at the Tatler. There are six : *Little Hiawatha* (a charmer), *Clock Cleaners* (Harold Lloyd-ish), *The Old Mill* (Disney in a Delius mood), *Lullabyland* (an old favourite), *Hawaiian Holiday* (an outing for Horace), and *The Moose Hunters*. The last is perhaps the best, with its wonderful mating scene in which Horace and Donald Duck, with the aid of a mask, lipstick, perfume, and a blonde wig, impersonate a highly seductive deer.

PETER GALWAY

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE PAPER

We offer prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea for the two most accurate entries, to be sent in by January 7th.

A

Give the author and work from which each of these quotations comes.

1. The languid strings do scarcely move !
   The sound is forc'd, the notes are few !
2. And Eugene Aram walked between,
   With gyves upon his wrist.
3. A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
   'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be !
4. How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho !
   How pleasant it is to have money.
5. There the hated name
   Of husband, wife, lust, modest, chaste or shame,
   Are vain and empty words, whose very sound
   Was never heard in the Elysian ground.
6. But oh, the very reason why
   I clasp them, is because they die.
7. La molle oisiveté des enfants des sultans.
8. Near to this gloomy cloister's gates
   There dwelt the blooming virgin Thwaites,
   Fair beyond measure, and an heir,
   Which might deformity make fair.
9. Cependant la sibylle au visage latin
   Est endormie encor sous l'arc de Constantin :
   —Et rien n'a dérangé le sévère portique.
10. Et rose elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses,
    L'espace d'un matin.
11. Chassez l'abbé, chassez le moine,
    O chasseur noir !
12. Hélas ! je suis, Seigneur, puissant et solitaire,
    Laissez-moi m'endormir du sommeil de la terre !
13. Je fuis, pâle, défait, hanté par mon linceul,
    Ayant peur de mourir lorsque je couche seul.
14. Et sur elle courbé, l'ardent Imperator
    Vit dans ses larges yeux étoilés de points d'or
    Toute une mer immense où fuyaient des galères.
15. A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys.
16. Life is a jest, and all things show it
    I thought so once, and now I know it.
17. Death stands above me, whispering low
    I know not what into my ear :
    Of his strange language all I know
    Is, there is not a word of fear.

18. Man disavows, and Deity disowns me,
Hell might offer my miseries a shelter;
Therefore, Hell keeps her ever-hungry mouths all
Bolted against me.
19. And when religious sects ran mad,
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
It will not be improved by burning.
20. Once I had friends—but they all forsook me!
Once I had parents—now they are in heaven!
I had a home once—once I had a husband—
Pity me, Stranger!
21. A street there is in Paris famous,
For which no rhyme our language yields
Rue Neuve des Petits Champs its name is
The New Street of the Little Fields.
22. The hippo's feeble steps may err
In compassing material ends,
While the True Church need never stir
To gather in its dividends.
23. Like as the wind does beautify a sail,
And as a sail becomes the unseen winds,
So do her words her beauties, beauties words.
24. These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
25. Oh wearisome Condition of Humanity!
Born under one Law, to another bound.
26. Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.
27. Thou art a toilsome Mole, or less
A moving mist,
But life is what none can express,
A quickness, which my God hath kist.
28. Much Antony, of Hamlet most of all,
And something of the Shorter-Catechist.
29. There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds.
30. The Queen she kept high festival in Windsor's lordly hall,
And round her sat the gartered knights, and ermined nobles all
There drank the valiant Wellington, there fed the wary Peel,
And at the bottom of the board Prince Albert carved the veal.

B

By whom is each of these quotations, and to whom does it refer?

1. He brays, the laureate of the long-ear'd kind.
2. Gentle and joyous, delicate and strong,
From the far tomb his voice shall silence mine.
3. Say that thou pourest them wheat,
And they will acorns eat,
'Twere simple fury still thyself to waste
On such as have no taste!
4. . . . For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,
And grew immortal in his own despite.
5. But still the other's Virgin was his wife.
6. Here lies a King that ruled as he thought fit
The universal monarchy of wit.
7. Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as Ocean deep;
For her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.
8. A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems;
Who, void of envy, guile and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain.
9. His raptures were
All air and fire, which made his verses clear;
For that fine madness still did he retain
Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.
10. He touched the hem of Nature's shift
Felt faint—and never dared uplift
The closest all-concealing tunic.
11. And Midas now neglected stands
With ass's ears and dirty hands.
12. There they sit ermine-stoled,
And she powders her hair with gold.

C

Identify the following:

The Comte d'Orgel, Count Orgaz, the Fairy Curate, the Lady of Elche, The Mad Lover, Maga, Dr. Thorne, Perronneau, Mme. de Villeparisis, Dittersdorf, le père Tanguy, Sue Bridehead, Schifanoia, a Duchess with three tails, Amico di Sandro, Aepinus, the Curé d' Ars, Al Kaswa, Sarah Grand, Mme. Grand, Mr. Apollinax, Fletcher Christian, John Arnolfini, the Modern Catiline, Sidrophel Skinnybonia, Trimalchio, Trigorin, Les Demoiselles de la Seine, Simone Boccanegra, Persimmon, Hrut, Zaide, Arthur Shrewsbury, Tamagno, Digby Dolben, Brugglesmith, Mary Arden, Ruksh, Montano, Hackenschmidt, Lord Eardley, Ben Turpin, Roger Pratt, the Miracoli.

D

1. In which book by Miss Austen is there a Mrs. Ellison?
2. Where out of doors in Central London is there a full length figure of Queen Alexandra?
3. In what public building in London is there a mosaic showing Greta Garbo in the guise of a Muse?
4. How much of an iceberg is under water?
5. What epic was published at one farthing "to mark the public contempt into which epic poetry had fallen"?
6. What is the work of which Dr. Johnson remarked that "perhaps no composition in our language has been oftener perused"?
7. Who wrote the English biography of Mme. Renan's uncle?
8. In what cathedral is there a stained-glass window, set up as a memorial to a brewer, and containing the text "I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink"?

E

1. Who wrote *The Thracian Women : Pontius Glaucus ; The Panegyric on Anthemius ; The Little Iliad?*
2. What were the date and the result of the Battle of Taginae?
3. On what were peacocks fattened for the table in the early Roman Empire?
4. Who or what were—Scirophorion; The Empirici; Damaretia; Abrotonon; Cleta and Phaenna?
5. What was (1) the Roman method of reckoning distances at sea; (2) the maximum rate of interest a moneylender in Rome was allowed to charge in the time of Augustus; (3) the pay of an Athenian juryman in 420 B.C.?

F

With what activities do you associate (1) A gold, (2) a four-inch archer, (3) an in wick, (4) a herring bone, (5) a scamperdale, (6) a haymaker, (7) a dusty miller, (8) an in and out, (9) a double eleven, (10) a grape-vine, (11) a clear circle, (12) a brass priest?

G

Each of the following statements contains five alternatives. Which is correct?

(1) *Cromek* is (*a*) a colour-film process, (*b*) a monolith, (*c*) a Melanesian coracle, (*d*) a Hungarian patriot, (*e*) an eighteenth-century engraver.

(2) *Ampersand* is (*a*) a Persian measure of distance, (*b*) a typographical sign, (*c*) an early balloonist, (*d*) an ingredient of *bouillabaisse*, (*e*) a type of electric bulb.

(3) *Locrine* is (*a*) the heroine of a poem by Musset, (*b*) a hair-oil, (*c*) a meeting of the waters in Ireland, (*d*) an Elizabethan tragedy, (*e*) an affection of the eyes in leprosy.

(4) *Freemartin* is (*a*) a method of gambling, (*b*) a bird, (*c*) a member of a secret society, (*d*) a portion of harness, (*e*) an abnormal cow.

(5) *Gouache* is (*a*) a Hungarian stew, (*b*) a cowboy, (*c*) a method of painting, (*d*) a ritual headdress, (*e*) a game of cards.

(6) *Ardeer* is (*a*) a place-name in Scotland, (*b*) a minor English landscape painter, (*c*) an African antelope, (*d*) a two-thonged whip, (*e*) a system of physical culture.

(7) *Quietus* is (*a*) a term in plain song, (*b*) a dagger, (*c*) a deflation, (*d*) a sleeping draught, (*e*) a settlement of accounts.

(8) *Gordouli* is (*a*) an Italian painter, (*b*) a character in the Arabian Nights, (*c*) a college song, (*d*) a reptile, (*e*) a possessed Hottentot.

(9) *Cowan* is (*a*) the original printer of the Revised Version, (*b*) a medieval man-at-arms, (*c*) an interloper on a meeting of masons, (*d*) a Welsh byre, (*e*) a sort of blackbird.

(10) *Quintain* is (*a*) a sequence in piquet, (*b*) a metric weight, (*c*) a recurring fever, (*d*) a tilting target, (*e*) a constellation.

(11) *Ahafona* is (*a*) a drug, (*b*) a Portuguese dance, (*c*) a theme song, (*d*) a village in Ireland, (*e*) a musical instrument.

(12) *Nick Dormer* is (*a*) a threepenny bit, (*b*) a character in Henry James, (*c*) a highwayman, (*d*) a novel by Jack London, (*e*) an intoxicating drink.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS

OLD MOORE'S ALMANACK COMPETITION

Set by Horace Samuel

It is now the season for professional prophets. Most interesting hurdles in the prophecy stakes are those dealing with the large issues of world politics. For the sake of competitors we will assume that the world has muddled on for another six months and that they are looking back on the period from 1st January to 1st July, 1938. We offer prizes of One Guinea and Half a Guinea for the best entries. Replies to this competition will be kept unopened in their envelopes until the end of next June.

Questions.

(1) Has there as yet (that is, before July, 1938) been any truce made between the Government and the rebels in Spain?

(2) In whose hands are (*a*) Barcelona, (*b*) Saragossa, (*c*) Madrid, (*d*) Seville?

(3) Give the gist of the latest statement made on behalf of the British Government about (*a*) British policy in Spain, and (*b*) British policy in China, in not more than 100 words.

(4) (*a*) Has any concrete proposition in regard to a revision of the colonial settlement of Versailles been made to Germany; (*b*) have any modifications to suit German ambitions been made in States bordering on Germany? Answer in not more than 25 words.

(5) (*a*) Who is the Prime Minister of France? (*b*) What events have occurred to strengthen or weaken the effectiveness of the Franco-Soviet Pact (not more than 25 words)?

Conditions.

(1) Answers must be written in the past tense as from July, 1938.

(2) Answers must be sent in not later than Friday, January 7th.

No. 406

Set by Roger Marvell

We offer prizes of One Guinea and Half a Guinea for the best epigram on the year 1937 (in not more than four lines).

Entries must reach this office not later than December 31st.

No. 407

Set by T. W. Earp

We offer prizes of one Guinea and Half a Guinea for the two best letters, of not more than 250 words, from a primitive African tribesman, who yet commands the English language, describing his impressions of a Christmas party attended by him on a visit here.

Entries must reach this office not later than December 31st.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 404

Set by V. S. Pritchett

In a café opposite the Morgue in Paris there used to be displayed a couplet which ran:

Quoique l'on dise, quoique l'on fasse,
On est mieux ici que l'on n'est en face.

The usual prizes are offered for a punning couplet in English.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

It was no doubt the combination of pubs and puns that made this competition popular, but ale-house wit was most at home with the prison, the asylum and the cemetery. This was perhaps natural; for do not the teetotallers tell us that it is but a step from the bar to these destinations? While you might, at a pinch, warn the drunkard he will end up on a bench in Trafalgar Square, you could not with much effect draw his attention to the dangers of the swimming pool or the Amusement Park; and I doubt if there is any known instance of alcoholic optimism or despair leading a man to the office of the Inland Revenue. Yet there is an obvious connection between this office and the pub which only "*Little Billee*" saw:

The gentlemen over the way will dun you presently:
We collect for the Revenue too—but how much more pleasantly.

His first couplet is, however, better and he gets the First Prize for it. The Second Prize was far more difficult. W. P. Barrett, for example, stands out with the most successful swimming-pool couplet:

Breast stroke and dive for some refreshment call:
Drink deep, your best stroke is the old pub crawl;

though I liked W. Leslie Nicholls':

How about a drink now, brother?
One low dive deserves another.

The cemetery caused 90 per cent. of the competitors to pun beer with bier; and the asylum and the grave caused ales and ails. This got monotonous. I'm inclined to favour originality and, though Patrick Thornhill's couplet is not as neat as others, his puns struck a different note and for that he has the second prize. But before setting down the winners here are some of the plums:

Opposite a Prison:

Wipe that frown off your ugly mug;
Remember this is a *bottle*-and-jug. (W. Leslie Nicholls).

Here ales, nor wines, nor spirits ever fail;
There whines the ailing spirit cooped in gaol. (L. Norwood.)

While none for quality our beer can touch,
One here and there, may have a "drop" too much.
(John A. Bellchambers.)

Opposite a Cemetery:

Whatever we do, whatever we say,
We're livelier here than over the way. (M. C. Trench.)

Here—Beers and Wines from the wood, so good,
There—Biers and Whines from the wood no good. (C. Vivian.)

The Great World's custom we discreetly share:
The "quick ones" here; the dead ones over there.
(Little Billee.)

Opposite an Asylum:

You run no risk by coming inside;
Only our drinks are certified. (W. Leslie Nicholls.)

Asylum from care is in our beer—
Then why be there instead of here? (Anon.)

Little Billee's winning couplet is:

Opposite a Prison:

Don't cross over the road. It is only the Mug
That gives up the Bottle to go to the Jug.

And Mr. Thornhill, at the Cemetery Arms, has the second prize:

There's a Body in our Beer, our Spirits fire th' Interior;
Our Dry Beaune's rattling good; and you'll find our Graves superior.

SOME DIVERSIONS FOR CHRISTMAS

(CALIBAN FOR BEGINNERS. NO PRIZES. SOLUTIONS NEXT WEEK.)

PROBLEM 1.—CHALLENGE

"Challenge is a good game," said Mr. Knoodle. "We might play that to-night,"

"Yes," said Mrs. Knoodle. "Especially if Joan's coming home. She'd like it."

"How's the game played?" asked Dorothy.

"Why," said Mrs. Knoodle, "we have to divide into two groups. One must be bigger than the other and each must consist of at least three players—"

Dorothy went into a huddle.

"Sorry," she said a few moments later. "I didn't hear the whole of the explanation. I was working out—just for practice, you know—the number of ways in which we could divide ourselves into the two groups."

"And what's the answer?"

"It depends on whether Joan comes or not. If she does the number of possible divisions is increased by 120."

How many Knoodles are there?

PROBLEM 2.—SNADGER'S

The Inter-House Soccer Cup provided a keen contest. Each team met each of the others once, as many matches as possible being played simultaneously. Thus the number of rounds played was one less than the number of competing teams.

The total number of matches played exactly equalled the total number of goals scored. Moreover it was noted by the curious that although, in each of the various rounds, the total number of goals was the same, their distribution among the competing teams was in no two cases the same. This was only just possible.

Our house, Snadger's, was beaten in all but one of its matches. The number of goals scored against us exceeded by 50 per cent. the number which we scored.

What were the scores of our various matches?

PROBLEM 3.—THE MUDDLE AT MISS MINNIFER'S

Five of the girls living at Miss Minnifer's are Miss Surbiton, Miss Acton, Miss Beckenham, Miss Ilford and Miss Willesden.

Odd, eh? Not half so odd as this fact: that each of them lives in a suburb which is a namesake of a second one, and works in a suburb which is the namesake of a third.

No two of them live in, or work in, the same suburb.

Here are more data. Miss Surbiton lives in the suburb where the girl who lives in Surbiton works. Miss Acton lives in the suburb where the girl who lives in Beckenham works. Miss

Beckenham lives in the suburb where the girl who lives in Willesden works. Miss Ilford lives in the suburb where the girl who lives in Ilford works.

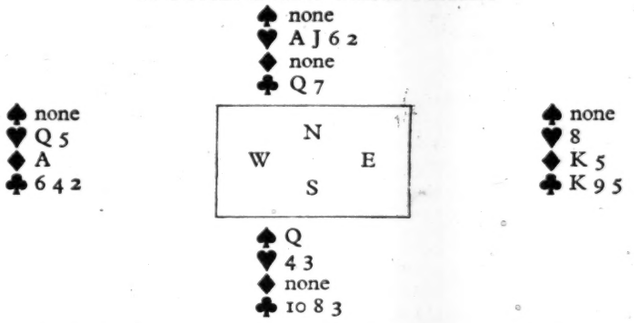
Miss Acton has never been to Surbiton. Miss Surbiton has never been to Ilford. The girl who lives in Beckenham has never been to Willesden.

Where does each girl live : and where does each girl work ?

PROBLEM 4.—WORD SQUARE

1. Might be Cassius perhaps.
2. More like Galahad ?
3. Where the lions at times went disappointed.
4. A landlord's tears.
5. Obliterate, that's all.

A DOUBLE DUMMY BRIDGE PROBLEM



North-South are partners against East-West. It is South's lead, and Clubs are trumps. North-South are to win four of the six tricks against any defence by East-West.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 260.—CRUISERS, LTD.

Visiting the Ambrosia recently, I discovered that the eight sales managers of Cruisers, Ltd., were enjoying a private dinner. I learned that they were celebrating five years' continuing prosperity.

"Each of them" (said my informant in awe-struck accents) "has been selling cruisers on progressively favourable terms. A commission of £1,000 in respect of each cruiser sold in the first year, of £2,000 in respect of each cruiser sold in the second year, of £3,000 in respect of each sold in the third year, of £4,000 in respect of each sold in the fourth year, and of £5,000 in respect of each sold in the fifth year. With a very interesting consequence. Each of the eight has sold nine cruisers; all have received the same total amount—in the course of the five years covered by their agreement—yet no two have made it in precisely the same way."

How many cruisers in all were sold in each of the five years ?

PROBLEM 258.—THE TAXI

"A case of Greek following Greek," This suggests the clue: that THE TAXI is to be read as THETA XI.

Now THETA is the eighth letter of the Greek alphabet; XI is the fourteenth letter; hence by cyclic elimination we get the message:

MYSTERY SUBMARINE LAUNCHED.

(Actually Kryptogrophos made an unimportant error in transcription; the two last letters of the message were transposed.)

PROBLEM 253.—FUN AT THE CHURCH BAZAAR

A set of Low's cartoons goes to L. Beecher, Alma House, Paget Road, Plumstead, S.E.18.

Seven points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

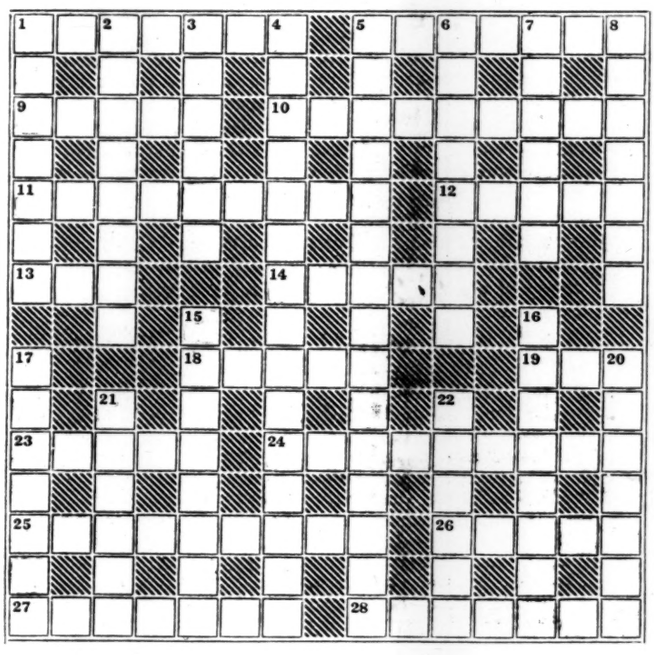
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 407

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

B. K. Watts, Tapscott, Culmstock, Devon.

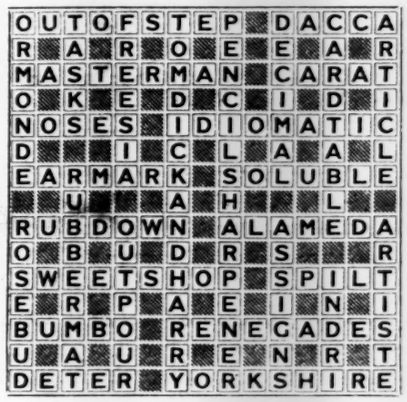
ACROSS

1. The rift in the lute's got about the ship. (7)
5. Novel description of Non-Intervention ? (7)
9. Nine after a fortissimo. (5)
10. Is this the flush produced by a good Christmas dinner ? (9)
11. Most prefer not to be out like this at this season. (9)
12. Present primroses certainly would be. (5)
13. Period of enlightenment ? (3)
14. The cub is returned to the company. (5)
18. Change later. (5)
19. On the borders of Hants. (3)
23. Accessible part of the river. (5)
24. It is finally railed off as it were. (9)
25. Apostolic joint. (9)
26. Many a motorist takes it on top nowadays. (5)
27. The sort of car that's unusually welcome at this time of year. (7)
28. He arranged the shepherd's programme for the year. (7)

DOWN

1. Brought up like all boys who are given a toy railway. (7)
2. Children could not play a hard game with them of course. (8)
3. Lay people are just about cross with such slackness. (6)
4. This should have been the Christmas flower. (15)
5. He must often find delivery difficult in this age of central heating. (15)
6. Where the Christmas greetings are displayed ? (8)
7. Latchkeys ? (6)
8. Up-to-date version of Erewhon. (7)
15. His bill of fare so to speak must be traced out. (8)
16. Where some of the people always pretend to be other than they are. (8)
17. Soldiers usually suffer no pain from them. (7)
20. One of a governing body who has the outward appearance of a Spanish gentleman. (7)
21. 1910. (6)
22. The horse can be sure his abode is fixed. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Westminster Latin Play

Terence's *Adelphi* has the neatness and the nice character drawing of the Attic New Comedy, from which it was borrowed; but it is not remarkable for wit or fun, and it is thinnish to modern taste. It turns essentially on the contrast between the two brothers, Demea, the dour and straitlaced country gentleman, and Micio, the easy-going man about town. One of his sons Demea brings up himself on the strictest principles; the other is adopted, and spoiled, by his indulgent uncle. Both lads get mixed up together in a naughty escapade, from which they are eventually extricated after a good deal of pother and argument between their elders. And so all ends happily, with the moral that a very strict and a very lax system of education are equally dangerous. The Westminster Scholars' performance of the play was good, if not brilliant. All the boys spoke their lines well—far better indeed than many of our professional actors are wont to do. The acting suffered from flatness—due, no doubt, to the restraint which the Westminster tradition dictates. This cramped the style particularly of Syrus, the slave, who should be full of life; Mr. Barlow showed at times that he was capable of putting that life into the part. Mr. Kinchin Smith has real dramatic power; his Micio was excellent. Mr. Castellain's Demea, though nothing like so finished, was a solid piece of work. The Epilogue was, as usual, a spirited topical rag. Here Terence's characters had changed their Athenian garb for the togs of to-day, and appeared—talking unterential Latin, peppered with ingenious puns—as Mr. Chamberlain with rod and line, Mr. Eden, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir O. Mosley, an undergraduate gay in his college colours, a whopping Physical Fitness instructress, and other persons meet to be guyed.

"Members Only" at the Gate.

On Monday the Gate Theatre produced their annual review "Members Only." It was a disappointment. The Gate Theatre has the advantage over others that it is independent of censorship and also employs trained actors which the undergraduate clubs do not. Yet "Members Only" is no better than the average O.U.D.S. Smoker or Footlights performance. The topical jokes are not funny; the Coronation was never very funny—why at this moment introduce two sketches of it? And the serious scene *First Class to Heaven*, which re-echoes *Outward Bound*, is terrible. A policeman and policewoman scene was funny, but not very new. The policewoman seemed an afterthought. There was one good cruel song "*Kensington Girls from Kensington Gore*," and one catchy tune "*You Stopped the Show*," otherwise the music was nothing much. The acting was better. Hermione Gingold was delicious as *Peace* and as a Montparnasse heroine, Richard Haydn's imitation lecture was brilliant, and so was Reginald Beckwith's strip-tease dance, the best acting of all was Hermione Gingold's and Richard Haydn's as two old landladies who guide their lives by the daily horoscopes. Charles Hawtrey was a fresh and agreeable *compère*. The best sketch was written by Betty Potter and Marjorie Gabain. One wishes they had written another. And one was safe where the words were by Hermione Gingold and Richard Haydn. The second half of the programme was better than the first but one missed continually any evidence of the activity, behind the scenes or the script, of an adult mind. Jokes about Geneva and Hore-Belisha, imitations of Douglas Byng, are the amusement of people on the edge of life, not in the middle of it, and the censor hasn't missed much, alas!

The Polish Ballet at Covent Garden

"We have the men, we have the guns, we have the dancers too"—the art of ballet, like every other art, is being pressed into the service of patriotism. Countries like Lithuania and England allow their *premières danseuses* to gyrate to foreign music, but the Poles are more thorough; their music and their decor are rigorously Polish. In Mme. Nijinska they have a gifted choreographer who learnt her job in the service of the hereditary enemy—and learnt it very well. Their dancers are agile, if still obviously a little inexperienced. M. Borowski, who designed the decor for *The Song of the Soil* has charming taste; and the composers, Michael Condracki and Roman Palester, are capable of producing what sounds very like ballet-music. There is also, of course, Chopin, and Mme. Nijinska has boldly made a "symphonic ballet" of the Concerto in E flat. This was played very well by M. Seryeryn Turel (and the London Philharmonic) and the last movement lent itself fairly happily to the dance. But the choreography never was quite close enough to the music—important changes of key, for instance, were unreflected by the dancers, who however made sudden striking and apparently uncalled-for entrances in the middle of themes. Mme. Nijinska is more felicitous in the second act of *The Legend of Cracow*, which contained some interesting inventions. And the best ballet is *The Song of the Soil*, based on folk-dances. Mesdames Slawska and Youshkevitch and M. Konarski danced with great spirit, and the evening was agreeable. *The Eternal Apollo*, with clever costumes by Daszewski, was hardly a serious contribution to ballet, and would be more suitable as a scene in a popular revue. Compared with an American ballet which was recently much applauded in London the Polish Ballet is dazzling; compared with the Sadler's Wells productions, the ballets of this company are rather provincial. It is a young affair, and still lacks polish.

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THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, December 24th—
"Peter Pan," Palladium (mats.).
"Cinderella," Princes.
"Aladdin," Adelphi.
"A Kiss for Cinderella," Phoenix (mats.).
"Macbeth," New (transfer).

MONDAY, December 27th—
"A Midsummer Night's Dream," Old Vic.
"Beauty and the Beast," Lyceum.
Sim-Sala Bim, Winter Garden.
"Treasure Island," Savoy (mats.).
"The Boy Who Lost His Temper," Garrick (mats.).

WEDNESDAY, December 29th—
Artists' International Association. Dance and Cabaret arranged by Rupert Doone, New Burlington Galleries. Tickets 5s.

SATURDAY, January 1st—
Winter School of Sociology and Civics, London House of Citizenship, 5 Bramham Gardens, S.W.5. Till Jan. 8th. Particulars from Institute of Sociology, 35 Gordon Square, W.C.1.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

FOR forty years I have been familiar with a volume entitled *Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, the red binding of which flutters with flags bearing harp and leopards and lion—which I construed as a promise of some tale of chivalry and romance. It was by my grandfather, but, alas!—there was nothing inside it about Lancelot, or Camelot, or the Holy Grail, or Saladin and Coeur de Lion. The book was a monstrous deception and even grown-up people found it dull. A few years ago I read it, and found E. G. Wakefield was an interesting character. Born at the end of the eighteenth century he was a smart young Quaker Buck, readier to take a hand in duelling than to frequent the company of his cousins, the Frys and the Gurneys. The headstrong insolence of his character did, however, bring them together—for he abducted an heiress from a girls' school, and was sentenced to three years in Newgate, where Elizabeth Fry visited him. Prison was the making of him: he wrote a book on the death penalty, and the result of allowing his mind to dwell on the evils of transportation was *A Letter from Sydney*, which was assumed to be genuine, and which led to the formation of the Colonisation Society. The remainder of his life was passed in scheming, agitation, and intrigue, in order to carry out his colonial ideas, and in particular to force the British Government to annex New Zealand. I am going to give myself a Christmas present of a more recent biography of him called *The Amazing Career of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, by Dr. A. J. Harrop, since I have just read his *England and the Maori Wars* (New Zealand Press, 92 Fleet Street, 15*s*.), which is an extraordinarily interesting book in which Wakefield just appears. Lest I should lead any readers into making the same unfortunate mistake as that into which the lions and the leopards led me, I must warn them that it is not an exciting book about savages, or about warfare. It is a book for those who are interested in Government Administration and the British Empire; it consists mostly of quotations from Official memoranda, Colonial Office dispatches, and other records.

* * *

The Maori War was fought for ten years against the wishes of almost all responsible English statesmen, and in the face of steady hostility on the part of the Colonial Office, the War Office, and the Navy, as well as of overwhelming condemnation by almost all the missionaries, headed by the great and good Bishop Selwyn. In 1869, after the war had been dragging on for nine years, Sir Frederic Rogers, the Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonies, summarised the situation admirably:

> the colonists wrest from the Home Government first the power of the purse, then responsible government . . . they loudly proclaim that they will govern the natives and that the Home Government shall not do so. Coincidentally with this, being greedy of land, and some of them furiously greedy, they induce Col. Browne, an honourable but weak man, to abandon the old cautious Imperial policy in respect to land buying, and so plunge—not as they suppose themselves—but the Imperial Government into an expensive war.

By 1856 the Maoris were alarmed at the settlers' purchases of land, and, with the encouragement of missionaries, formed a league to refuse to sell any more land. At the same time the idea of choosing a Maori King spread amongst them, which they felt would help to preserve their identity as a nation. This however did not imply repudiating their allegiance to Queen Victoria, though so represented. The European settlers were, however, determined to have the land, and though Colonel Browne clearly saw the dangers, he bought land at the mouth of the Waitara river, the title of which was disputed. Archdeacon Hadfield wrote:

> Is a native chief to be forcibly ejected from his land because an individual member of his tribe tells a subordinate land-agent that it is his and not the chief's, and the agent believes him? The Governor says "Yes"; the chiefs say "No."

Martial law was proclaimed, soldiers were dispatched and in spite of protests by Selwyn, the natives were proclaimed rebels before they had committed any crime worse than that of passive resistance. Very soon settlers were being murdered and the *Times* was lamenting "that we have become involved in the barbarous politics of New Zealand." The Maoris were fairly well armed with rifles and double-barrelled guns, fortified themselves cleverly and defeated the troops sent against them. Very soon the *Times* was rebuking those "whose inopportune scruples weaken the hands of the Government," and with inveterate imbecility laying down "that the first rule is to restore order first and redress grievances afterwards." No error is more fatal and more frequent. Nothing so flies in the face of all experience and all common-sense dealings with aggrieved and angry people. Yet every strike and mutiny and riot is fomented by this fantastic idea of exacting submission before offering justice to the injured party.

* * *

The war spread and went badly, weak Colonel Browne was transferred to Tasmania (there all but half a dozen of the natives were already extinct) and Sir George Grey, a former Governor, was sent back to New Zealand. After he had been there eighteen months facts came to his notice which made him declare that "the natives are in the main right in their allegations regarding the Waitara land purchase and it ought not to be gone on with." His discovery came too late. A general native rising seemed imminent. Murders were being committed, Grey began clamouring for troops, and the wounded Maoris were being killed instead of being taken prisoner. Strangely enough, in spite of this ferocity, the heroism of the Maoris was always exciting admiration. "The Maoris behaved splendidly!" is a feature of the reports. In 1863 Grey decided that a policy of confiscation of Maori lands should be adopted "as a punishment." The Duke of Newcastle was sceptical of the wisdom of this course—"other tribes might take it as a proof of greediness for land"—which, of course, it wasn't. However, the war at once became more indiscriminate and embittered; the Maoris began to kill missionaries, to swallow their eyeballs, and to see visions. Captain Lloyd's head was cut off and circulated, blood was drunk and the Archangel Gabriel appeared, offering legions of angels to aid in the extermination of the whites, enjoining promiscuous relationships between the sexes, and promising that the Virgin Mary should take the field. Thus encouraged, the Maoris inflicted a severe defeat on a mixed naval and military force which turned tail after almost all the officers had been killed or wounded. The Home Government was naturally appalled by the expense of these operations, while the British officers were disgusted. General Cameron wrote in a private letter to Grey that the war was being carried on only for the profit of the colonists. Grey published the letter, and after a considerable rumpus Cameron resigned, and Grey began to direct military operations himself. The Home Government ordered all the troops home except one regiment of infantry and a battery of artillery. Grey was accused of sanctioning atrocities, and replied in insubordinate dispatches lecturing the Secretary of State. Sir Frederic Rogers noted "the best policy is to get Sir G. Grey and General Chute out of New Zealand as soon as practicable." In 1869, Lord Granville became Secretary for the Colonies and wrote plainly that "the dangers of New Zealand are not due to the punctual performance of their obligations to the Maori race, but rather to the adoption of a policy which, if not inconsistent with those obligations, was certain to appear so." At the same time he insisted on the return of the last regiment left in New Zealand. This was resisted for some time and was the occasion of frantic appeals—even by the colonists, and led to overtures to the United States. Gladstone and Granville were not to be intimidated; in 1870 the last troops left and a few months later the settlers and the Maoris stopped fighting. The only benefit of ten years of extremely bloodthirsty warfare had been to define the expenditure which Great Britain would assume for a self-governing colony and to enhance Maori self-respect. They can still boast: "We never sued for peace: we only left off fighting."

DAVID GARNETT

THE GONCOURTS: PRIVATE VIEW

The Goncourt Journals, 1851-1870. Edited and translated by LEWIS GALANTIÈRE. *Cassell.* 15s.

Do you know those days when, for no reason you could lay a finger on, your attention is fixed by a particular shape or colour? Halfway down the news column you stare at a familiar word, to see if it is misspelt; the letter "g"—a pair of spectacles standing on end—fascinates; a hundred "g's" spring out of the page. Or red, perhaps, is the order of the day, and you gaze at a sun of strontium, brick villas, letter boxes, faces hanging in the wind from which every feature has vanished except the lips. These indispositions—provided they are brief and not too frequent—may assist, may steepen the imagination.

The critic who has learnt to disguise his "bad" days stifles an important source in himself. He has his usual article to write; he writes it, a little worse than usual. A dull equanimity, in the circumstances, is the most he can hope for. But his real mood, his jaundice or bizarre fixity—where would that have taken him? Let us say he is reading a new edition of Swinburne. As he turns over the pages he finds to his horror that from all those thousands of lines not one poem, not one flicker of poetry emerges; instead the thought hammers at his brain: "This fellow is a damned liar!" He looks again; same response. Well, there are his two articles, of which he must choose one: he can bolster up memory—and so a fictitious Swinburne—or he can follow, experimentally, his new mood.

That mood is not, of course, necessarily one of distaste. But it insists on the smaller pattern, the idiosyncratic response. Then, a book such as the Goncourts', unrolling again its famous picture of the Second Empire, ceases to impress by mere scale; the outer scenes drop away, there is left a small circle of artists meeting and talking. Flaubert,, Gautier, Gavarni. Those three. They stand out gigantically. They are superb. They talk one thing, literature; yet even that is not the centre for which I am looking. A feeling that the Goncourts have *collected* them, as they collected paintings, japonaiserie, landscape, and the grey detail of their novels, sets me on the track: not literature, so much as the literary life, is what the brothers were after.

They had a genius for it, for being in it and stage-managing it, as Diaghilev had for the ballet. At other times writers have felt a superstitious awe of the way in which they lived (Gissing to a young novelist: "Have you starved?"), but never surely such awe as was known by the successors of Romanticism in Paris. Baudelaire, the intimate of no circle, seems halfway between the old order and the new, in a limbo of his own:

> Baudelaire took supper to-night at the table next to ours. He was without cravat, his shirt open at the throat, his head shaved, absolutely the toilette of a man ready for the guillotine. At bottom, however, the whole appearance carefully staged: his little hands washed, their nails cleaned, as tended as the hands of a woman; and with this the face of a maniac, a voice that cuts like steel, and an elocution aiming at the ornate precision of a Saint-Just, and hitting it.

No mistaking, there, the note of professional appraisal, the eye one woman has for the dress of another. The portrait is well known; how much more, in a few lines, we learn about Baudelaire than we learn about the Goncourts at the end of the whole nine volumes! Why is it that they themselves, despite prodigious taste and talent, remain curiously negative when we have finished reading? Quite simply, they are two persons who behave as one. It is as though we had visited a house where two sisters sat side by side, dressed alike and balancing one another, so that we think of them afterwards as two flowers on a stalk. The analogy of the Goncourts, and their relationship in literature, takes again and again a womanly direction; it is an emotional, a *female* relationship. The hermit's life, long hours of writing, rare appearances in public, clinical visits, endless documentation—all these they had in common with Flaubert. But Flaubert (described once by his doctor as "an hysterical old woman") appears a bull beside them. He gazes stupidly, stamps, bellows, charges, butts his head against thin air—and trots back to Croisset and his ten hours a day.

> How little we live, we who write! Taine, putting himself to bed at nine, rising at seven, working till noon, dining at a provincial hour, paying calls, running to libraries, spending the evening with his mother and his piano. Flaubert, chained like a convict to his work. Ourselves in our cloistered incubation, neither bothered nor distracted by family or society . . .

"Ourselves"—and yet they went round a bit, they *shared* the hermit's life, they travelled, they collected everything, they called on critics, they added migraines, shocks and nervous collapses to their regimen of work, and when one had the backache the other as likely as not would retire to bed with a swollen ankle. With horror they learn one morning that Flaubert is doing *fourteen hours a day*, and probably going off his head—no beating that. Their own protests of overwork, which are frequent, do not strike us as being untrue or affected—far from it; but we feel that these toils have been consciously undertaken, whereas Flaubert or Gavarni came to them naturally—that they are, in fact, an essential part of that literary life which the Goncourts were determined to pursue.

An odd thing about these labours. "Labour" is indeed the word they would have used; conception, gestation, childbirth, the growing family—there is hardly a detail of the whole process which at one time or another they do not borrow to describe their own production. It is hardly accident and, as used by them, it is more than an expansion of literary commonplace. I feel that these terms exactly and sympathetically described for them the states through which they were passing. Naturally enough, they were jealous and contemptuous of women.

> Men like ourselves require a woman with little breeding, small education, gay and natural in spirit, to charm and please us as would an agreeable animal to which we might become attached. But if a mistress had a veneer of breeding, or of art, or of literature, and wanted to talk on an equal footing with us about our thoughts and our feeling for beauty; if she were ambitious to become the companion of our task or of the book gestating within us, she would become for us as unbearable as a piano out of tune.

The circumstances which led them to writing were obviously complicated, and I think I am right in my guess that fundamentally it was the process of literature, the life, drawing them closer, which attracted. There was nothing directly homosexual in their attachment; nor was it only the marriage of true minds. One might define them by saying that they came hand-in-hand offering themselves as *mistresses* to their art. Yes, that's the word. Flaubert, Gavarni, etc., look so different because they were *masters*.

None of this, let me add, is said in depreciation. The relationship, indeed, added the touch of genius; it *was* their genius. Taste determined their lives to a degree which we should not find in any single writer of genius: they could not look at horses without seeing a Géricault, and their visits to the country are often accompanied by the remark that landscapes are more real in paintings. They introduced Japanese art to the modern world—perhaps their greatest originality. They disinterred Watteau from the cellars of the Louvre. They fused a passion for the new science with the instincts for living of the eighteenth century. They wrote exactly the right novels at the right time—*Germinie Lacerteux* might have been undertaken expressly to start off Zola. Their literary judgment of contemporaries was right to a millimetre. They ruled the situation.

And they ruled it as women do—in their homes and in their lives. The novels, the histories, the monographs on art and manners: admirable though many of them are, they do not explain why the Goncourts were so tremendous a literary force. Without the *Journals*, in fact, the secret of their genius, that genius itself, would be missing. All their talents were poured into this record of their lives: it is an amazing book, one of the great feats of literature. The form, with its possibilities of abrupt syntax, epigrammatic comment, and daring sensibility, suited them exactly. How striking, for example, is the tragic story of their old servant, Rose, as told in the *Journals;* how monotonous and icy, by comparison, *Germinie Lacerteux*, the novel they built out of it. That neurasthenia which they valued so much and which provides in the Journal a stinging awareness of moment and detail, could not be protracted without lassitude to the single mood of a long story. Moreover, their first impressions were best. The famous figures of the time, as they step into their pages, are snapshotted in a few lines for ever.

This lopsided and rather queasy review has been provoked partly by the faults of Mr. Lewis Galantière's selection. It gives a good enough idea of the pedestalled Goncourts, the historians everyone should read. But the translation is insensitive—often it misses the whole point of the Goncourt style, the bouquet of slang; and the same insensitiveness in selection robs the book of much on its personal side. Mr. Galantière blithely dismisses their "momentariness" with the remark: "Omitted also are a good number of epigrams which fail to come off." Possibly he means that in his English they would fail to come off. In any case, his 280 pages are an inadequate miniature of the 2,000 or so

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of the original. The book ends in 1870 with the death of Jules: that is not unreasonable. But then it drags on for another 80 pages of "Biographical Repertory," notes written on the characters of the Journal by Mr. Galantière. And they don't come off, either.

G. W. STONIER

THE PACIFIST FAITH

The Conquest of Violence. By BART DE LIGT, with an introduction by ALDOUS HUXLEY. *Routledge.* 7s. 6d.

Let Us Honour Peace. Essays by ROSE MACAULAY, PHILIP MUMFORD, L. P. PEKIN, CANON RAVEN, VERA BRITTAIN, J. D. BERESFORD, GRAHAM HOWE, GERALD HEARD, ELIZABETH THORNYCROFT, R. H. WARD. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 3s. 6d.

Introduction to Pacifism. By PHILIP MUMFORD. *Cassell.* 2s.

The strength of pacifism to-day is the breakdown of all the recipes for preventing war. The effort to build a superstate, which has absorbed so much of the idealism of our age, has crashed against the brick-wall of state sovereignty. Statesmen who have admitted that competitive arms mean general war and that general war nowadays means race suicide are reduced to the absurd contradiction of declaring that our only security lies in a huge rearmament programme. It is not surprising to find people declaring that they will not take part in war and refusing, so far as refusal is possible, to indulge in activities which are admittedly leading to race suicide. So long as they stick to this individual position, simply saying that there are some crimes which no cause can justify, they are on strong and almost impregnable ground. If the complete pacifist merely says "I am not the kind of person who drops bombs on unarmed civilians and nothing can make me do so," his position may be "impracticable," but it is logical and indeed beyond argument.

This ethical stand is, I think, the common basis for all out-and-out pacifism. On it a large number of different structures can be built. In *Let Us Honour Peace*, a Christian pacifist like Canon Raven builds one thesis, while a common-sense and sceptical pacifist like Rose Macaulay builds a second, and a mystic like Mr. R. H. Ward a third. Mr. Ward is of the stuff of which martyrs are made. His position is purely intuitive; it does not depend on consequences, either to himself or to other people. He is sure that this is wrong and that is right and does not care for utilitarian deduction. He knows that "don't care was hanged," but like the famous divine would add, "hanged on a cross." His remarkable essay is called *Death in Order*. He writes:

> The man who, in his eagerness to die for his cause, misses out Gethsemane is no true martyr, is a witness to nothing but a pathological desire for the dramatic escape. His death by suicide is as untimely as, and far more futile than, the private soldier's in a muddy trench. . . . Timely death can come only to him who has followed every valid hope of living, and is presented finally with the naked choice of dying or using the wrong means (such as recanting what he believes with his whole being) to preserve his life; who has no smallest thought of dying nobly and impressing his less courageous brethren . . . only the man who has really separated himself from the war circle, will have the opportunity, the courage, for this death. . . . Only then will the privilege of death upon a cross be due to them. . . .

The common ground between such a view and the practical argument of Capt. Mumford or Rose Macaulay is, as I say, that whatever else is true in an anarchic world, it cannot be good to base national or individual policy on preparation for roasting babies. The practical pacifist, as Gerald Heard has argued, need not go so far as to say that under no circumstances could it be right or has it ever been right to fight or even kill. He says that war to-day has become a monstrosity to which the old argument for self-defence no longer applies. If a thug tries to take your life, the pacifist may argue, you may be right as a last resort to take his, but because you have reason to believe that a thug is likely to attack you, you have no right to try to stop him by killing as many as possible of his innocent relatives. War has become a monstrously inefficient way of settling disputes. Its effect, the pacifists argue, can never be to obtain any of the things that it sets out to obtain. If you fight against Fascism you have to prepare a military machine which amounts to Fascism in your own country. All national phrases to justify war are so many illusions. If you go to war to save democracy, you will give up democracy in doing so, and then find that you are fighting for the overseas investments of your own capitalist class, and very possibly riveting the chains on another proletariat which also has democratic ambitions. To those who say that this refusal to fight means handing the world over to the tender mercies of Hitler and Mussolini, the pacifist admits that the old order has left many insoluble problems, but adds that there are more Christian and also more scientific methods of dealing with criminals and lunatics than by murdering their relatives. At worst, you can be sure that it is not desirable to fight to maintain stolen property. You can begin by setting your own house in order. You can suggest general disarmament and lead the way to it by disarming yourself whether people follow it or not. No doubt there is a risk that you will be invaded and conquered, and the Empire will probably be taken from you. Even the first contingency would not mean as much suffering and evil as war, while the second may not be the greatest of disasters to the world as a whole. Further, pacifist policy is to urge an international conference with colonial concessions to the Have-not Powers, reduction of tariffs, and the creation of the largest possible organisation of individuals who will not fight in a future war, and who in the meantime learn to base their lives on the non-provocative and constructive principles of Christian co-operation.

All this argument is based on the assumption of a foreign war. But the danger to-day may well be, for the time at least, less that of a grand international conflict than of a series of smaller wars, limited in area, but utterly destructive, half civil and half international, provoked by Fascism in every country in which there is a serious chance of democracy leading on to Socialism. What has the pacifist to say to such wars of the privileged and the propertied against the dawning democracy? Would he suggest that the Spanish Government, which is, we sometimes forget, a legal, properly elected Government, ought not to use the force of the community to stop the return of that ancient alliance of the Church, the Army and the landlord, reinforced by the money, arms and technical assistance of foreign Fascism? Here clearly is the crux of the matter. There is no difficulty in agreeing that the individual ought not blindly to obey the war lord as he did in 1914, but much in urging him not to defend his right to a free life when his class superiors try once again to drive him into the mental and physical misery of feudal serfdom. Discussing this problem of resistance to tyranny Bertrand Russell, now a convert of the "absolute" position, says that if the choice were between fighting and non-resistance, he would favour fighting, but that that is not the choice. The pacifist alternative is "non-violent resistance"—a technique which has to commend it that by it Gandhi came near to driving the British out of India. *The Conquest of Violence*, by Bart de Ligt, is an examination of the possibilities and history of non-violent resistance by a Left-wing Socialist who regards "Stalinism" as the betrayal of all true Socialism. His list of non-violent political strikes is interesting, and his thesis worth far more study than men have yet given it in the West. It gains a new importance from the fact that resistance to oppression where the oppression has the monopoly of modern weapons may be physically impossible except by non-violent means. To follow Shelley's advice and "stand with folded arms" may require immense courage, and in countries where the entire educational system has been directed to eliminating the distaste and guilt of violence from the young it may involve the martyrdom of thousands. Its advocate need not urge that it will succeed; merely that it is likely to succeed, given the strict discipline of an army, as often as any revolutionary army can hope to win. It is at least possible that this technique is to-day developing in various countries without our being aware of it. I do not believe that men are going tamely and permanently to submit to the destruction of human values involved in Totalitarianism. I know, at any rate, that every civilised man must resist the encroachments of its degrading propaganda with all the strength in his possession. Far better in my view to fight as in Spain against Totalitarianism with the only weapon at your command; but it would be foolish to deny that there may be situations and people who will resist more effectively by the means through which the Quakers won their civil liberties before their more militant fellow-countrymen.

Today, as I see it, the crux for the Peace Pledge Union lies in this: idealists will not be satisfied by a refusal to fight in the future; they want to take part in the efforts that are being made to stop war now. And as soon as they do that, the P.P.U. will find itself involved in current politics. Politics must involve compromise and conjure up intellectual and moral problems for which the refusal to fight does not in itself provide a solution.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

SHENSTONE AND THE PICTURESQUE

William Shenstone. An Eighteenth Century Portrait.
By A. R. HUMPHREYS. *Cambridge University Press.* 6s.

Than its conversation-pictures, the eighteenth-century has left behind few pleasanter memorials, and it is perhaps their pleasantest characteristic that they should throw so much light upon the tastes and sympathies of the men and women for whom they were created. They show us the Augustan Age as it saw itself—a period of leisure and enlightenment, of good manners, sound good sense and refined feeling, in which romantic melancholy was not denied its legitimate due. Equally improper to be over-busy or causelessly idle. Excessive enthusiasm was, of course, to be discouraged. And what other period has produced so many representations of good-looking, good-tempered people doing nothing—or doing very little—and doing it with such a cheerful and self-confident air? Thus, the Garricks take tea in a riverside garden. We are on the Thames, bound, no doubt, for some delicious whitebait-dinner; and the musicians of the party tune up their instruments. Or we are with Stubbs, in the carriage-maker's brand new masterpiece, and watch a blood stallion put through its paces by a dwarfish groom.

The landscape reflects the mood of the figures who diversify it. A hint of wildness does not detract from a certain essential, inner sobriety that strews the evidence of human taste and human occupation around the feet of the loftiest precipices, among the knotted roots of the oldest and darkest trees. The effect may be romantic, but it is not harshly forbidding; the wind may blow cool but it is never icy; even the hermit can be sure of a weather-tight cell. Should nature presume to indulge in tantrums—should inky clouds surge up over the hillsides (their outline artfully imitated from Salvator Rosa)—a classic urn appears to put our minds at ease, or a trim Palladian house beckons us down some lengthy avenue. We realise there is a human welcome in the immediate neighbourhood. We are safe and sound. It is mercifully improbable we shall get our feet wet.

The Augustans envisaged nature as a kind of garden; but it is also true that they saw the garden as an extension of surrounding nature, in which natural elements were assembled and harmonised by human skill. The Augustan Age was the great period of the landscape gardener. And of the various gardeners, dilettante or professional, who devoted their talents to making of nature what Nature—had it a soul—might have wished to be, none was more celebrated than William Shenstone. On the whole, he would scarcely have deserved a full-length portrait. Weak although willing, irresolute and formless though good-natured, he was all charm, but very little definition and fits, neatly enough, into the restricted biographical frame that has been constructed for his benefit by Mr. A. R. Humphreys. But his sensitiveness happened to suit with the taste of his time. His particular type of sensibility was in tune with the sensibility of his epoch: he became a prophet, and his life-work became a legend. Everyone of consequence visited The Leasowes. It was Shenstone's keenest pleasure to pose as proprietor and cicerone.

But Shenstone himself was not an innovator. He interpreted the new taste in landscape-gardens; but he did not originate it; and some of Mr. Humphrey's most entertaining chapters are concerned with the beginnings of the cult, which he traces back to the influence of Sir William Temple. That influence, again, derived from the extreme Orient. "The Chineses" (remarked Temple, in his essay *Upon the Gardens of Epicurus*) set no store—were, indeed, moved to ridicule—by the symmetrical style in gardening so popular among Europeans during the seventeenth century. Any boy, they declared, could "plant Walks of Trees in Straight Lines, and over-against one another, and to what Length and Extent he pleases." They were disgusted by a mere display of mechanical rectitude; and these saffron-skinned aesthetes had gone so far as to coin a special word "for a phenomenon of which the very idea had hardly penetrated to Europe—the phenomenon of beauty occurring in the absence of discernible or recurrent design." That powerful, but mysterious, word was *Sharawadgi*. Confronted with a garden that satisfied them, it possessed *Sharawadgi*, they would always exclaim! And so the offshoot of Taoist philosophy reached English gardeners.

Shenstone was not the first to encourage its flowering. Before his advent, persons of taste were already inflamed against the soulless, mathematical pleasaunces that had been cut out to a prescribed pattern by Le Nôtre, and had begun to long for wilder prospects and for larger views. Pope had gibed at the pompous gardens of the Duke of Chandos:

> No pleasing intricacies intervene,
> No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
> Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
> And half the platform just reflects the other . . .
> Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bowers;
> These gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs;
> Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
> And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

Regularity and formality were now anathema. The "vicious and puerile state" that had prevailed when Le Nôtre—ogre of advanced eighteenth-century gardening—had prowled through some hapless undeveloped landscape, "eternally fondling the rule and the line, those baleful instruments," had once and for ever been brought to an end; and, in its place, was the reign of picturesque fantasy. It might be needful to "smooth or brush the Robe of Nature—"; but the smoothing or brushing process must be reduced to an absolute minimum.

In an unusually interesting and well-constructed little book, Mr. Humphreys shows us the progress of eighteenth-century aesthetic taste as it was revealed through the planning of parks and gardens, and explains how Shenstone was affected by the general tendency. That he had an original or penetrative genius, we cannot pretend. Yet—it may have been more by luck than genius—he managed to tap one of the main currents of Augustan aesthetic sensibility and to divert it into his own ambitious channels. But Shenstone was ambitious without undue tiresomeness. It was enough for his contentment that important people should allow themselves to be conducted around that grassy circular walk which, embracing his entire estate, meandered past ruins and hermitages into "dark narrow dells," emerged to enjoy open rustic champaigns, plunged into ingenious scraps of wasteland, "shut up by rude trees" and "wild hanging coppices," entered an enchanting valley known as *Virgil's Grove* and so, amid scenes and monuments of endless variety, strayed back on to the safe greensward of the Priory Walk. This was Shenstone's destiny, and this his happiness. A man of moods, much harassed by ennui and melancholy, at his brightest he describes himself,

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a very bland epicure, "sauntering about the grounds, taking snuff, and reading *Clarissa*" or (better still) "making dinners; accepting of invitations; sitting up till three o'clock in the morning with young sprightly married women, over white port and *vin de paysans*"—at his worst, as a miserable solitary and hypochrondriac; and, no doubt, his normal condition lay between the two. Mr. Humphreys has composed a delicate and humorous portrait that adds considerably to our knowledge of an absorbing period.

PETER QUENNELL

ART FROM DESPOND

The Painter's Object. Edited by MYFANWY EVANS. *Howe.* 10s. 6d.

The Painter's Object has no objective. It advocates no cause. It does not explain. It is a collection of writings by artists with a vivacious introduction by Miss Myfanwy Evans, editor of *Axis*. The writings are on a variety of subjects. Mr. Paul Nash's article on Swanage and Surrealism reappears, as does Mr. Henry Moore's Notes on Sculpture (from *The Listener*). M. Alexander Calder tells simply and lucidly how he came to make those superior toys, his mobiles. Professor Moholy Nogy has a film scenario which might be of some interest as a film. There is a translation of an essay on Courbet by Chirico, illustrated typically enough by one Courbet and two Chiricos. Most of these articles are written in a style which appears to be a pastiche of bombastic whimsical French journalese. But neither manner nor direction is unanimous. Their authors, however, have this in common, that they all belong to schools of painting (or sculpture) which recoil from the external world, and who impose forcibly their personal stamp—the formalism of abstraction or the poetry of Surrealism. These artists, surrounded by and sensitive to what their spokesman calls "the incredible ruin and inconsequence and purposelessness of the world to-day," recoiling from the horror, have formalised what appears to them to be chaos. Picasso's *Guernica* is a tidy shambles, so closely related to "a table, a wineglass, a guitar" that one might suppose all his work to have been a preparation for atrocities. This great decoration is a gesture of fatalism—propaganda against catastrophes rather than in favour of humanity, accepting the horror as evidence of appalling nature—as if to say, "frightful, but what can one do." For artists who believe that "man is the instrument of nature" (Picasso reported by Zervos), for Paul Nash, Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore, Helion and the rest of those whose art is part of nature rather than a symbol of man's ability to overcome natural forces, for Graham Sutherland who defines sculpture as being the equivalent of some awesome outcrop of stone, there is nothing to do. Disappointment in reason, disillusionment in Humanism, has produced Abstraction and Surrealism. For those who feel there is no hope, the nature cults of to-day provide a semblance of order and a sop to mysticism.

Perhaps the most significant of these essays is Mr. John Piper's "Lost a Valuable Object." Mr. Piper senses the despair of those who have lost faith in humanity and outside things and have dived back into pre-history to begin again. It is easy to see that for artists who believe in "the incredible ruin and inconsequence and purposelessness of the world to-day," "the tree standing in the field has practically no meaning at the moment." Or, as M. Helion has put it, "I am in a mess like any serious artist I have known." Subjective art forms are the product, less of aesthetic considerations than of very real revulsion. There can be no question of these artists painting, sculping, or even writing *down* to the public. What is required of them if their attitude is to change is that they should see that this world is not ruined, not inconsequential, not purposeless; that even in a world made miserable by conflict between progress and reaction, adult, human and objective values are possible. Mr. Piper concludes "it will be a good thing to get back to the tree in the field." It is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

GRAHAM BELL

PERSONALITY PARADE

George VI. By HECTOR BOLITHO. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 10s. 6d.

Certainly it is an ill-wind. The Abdication, disastrous to the unfortunate Mr. Dennis, has provided fresh grist for the Bolitho mills. It did not catch the historian of the House of Windsor unawares. His inkwell filled, his pen-nib fresh, in no time he had produced an *Edward VIII* which has already sold over 100,000 copies. And now, in no time, he has dished us up another sovereign. About Edward VIII there was at least much to be said, much to be discussed; about George VI there is very little—and nothing essential—that we did not already know. No one's character, least of all a monarch's, can be candidly and dispassionately analysed during his lifetime. The biographer is forced back upon externals; in this instance the record of the strict attention to duty and blameless domesticity of a very honest and decent gentleman. The unpromising material has to be eked out with a mass of irrelevancies and platitudes. So we get anecdotes occurring twice, and phrases ("a couple joined together in love and unanimity") no fewer than seven times, a rehashed description of the last days of George V and of his son's Coronation, and stray snatches of history and social philosophy; the whole liberally sprinkled with *trivia* of quite unexampled triviality.

We assist at royal interiors:

> Princess Mary would make the toast on an electric toaster and Prince Edward would pour out the coffee. . . . King George sat at the head of the table, doting upon his good stories of the sea, recalling his own boyhood when he had been punished for putting marline spikes in the bed of a First Lieutenant.

We encounter the Prince's tutor, but are not told his name: only that he was "not likely to muddle his [charge's] head with false ideas." "He was always to learn," says Mr. Bolitho, "through experience rather than from the dead pages of books"; forgetting that not all books, not even all royal biographies, are equally dead. From Dartmouth, where Prince Albert let off fireworks in the lavatories, we follow his career to Rauceby Cottage, where he lodged while receiving instruction at the Air Force station at Cranwell. "To this day" the gardener remembers him:

> "Oh, yes, we remember the Prince," he has said. "He'd come in and sit down and talk to us. There was no side about him. Oh, no. And everybody in the village loved him. He was so nice to everyone. No nonsense about him. Oh, no."

In September 1918 he went to the front for the first time, and was received at Nancy by Sir Hugh Trenchard. There he proved himself "damned good company and especially adept at leap-

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frog," and took part in a stirring snowball fight between all the H.Q. officers :

> Prince Albert, in a flanking movement and at a range of about two feet, dislodged the hat of what appeared to be Lord Doune, the G.O.C.'s A.D.C., who retaliated at even closer range by neatly depositing a couple of the best down the Prince's back.

This is a quotation from Captain Cunningham Reid; but Mr. Bolitho again speaks for himself in describing the King's post-war Cambridge career. At his Cambridge house

> Prince Albert continued to weed the tennis lawn, change his own pen-nibs, and tinker with his motor bicycle. When more hot water was needed at tea, it was not unusual for the servants to see the kitchen door open and the Prince's arm appear with the jug. " Could I have some hot water, please ? "

Perhaps that anecdote marks rock bottom ; but it is closely rivalled by the account of Queen Mary's visit on the following page :

> The servants were delighted and surprised on this day of the Queen's visit when she stepped into the hall and said, first of all, " Fish for luncheon, I can smell it."

On the subject of Queen Elizabeth the author is no less flat. Her section is prefixed by "*Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments.*"—SHAKESPEARE. She comes, we learn, of a talented house : " pianos, paint brushes and pens are often busy at Glamis." Her nurse called her " an exceptionally happy, easy child " ; and Sargent found her " the only completely unconscious [*sic*] sitter " he had ever painted.

It would be tiresome to quote more : the platitudes and ineptitudes are unending, and make us desperately sorry for the royal couple who are their victims. Mr. Bolitho himself expresses sympathy for the lot of the twentieth-century monarch ; not because he has to undergo a life-time of this sort of gossip, but for the strangest of reasons—that he cannot behead people who annoy him :

> There were compensations for kings in the old days when swords were sharp and when the royal temper had not to be curbed. With constitutional monarchy, kings have lost most of the privileges of their state and they have kept none but the disadvantages.

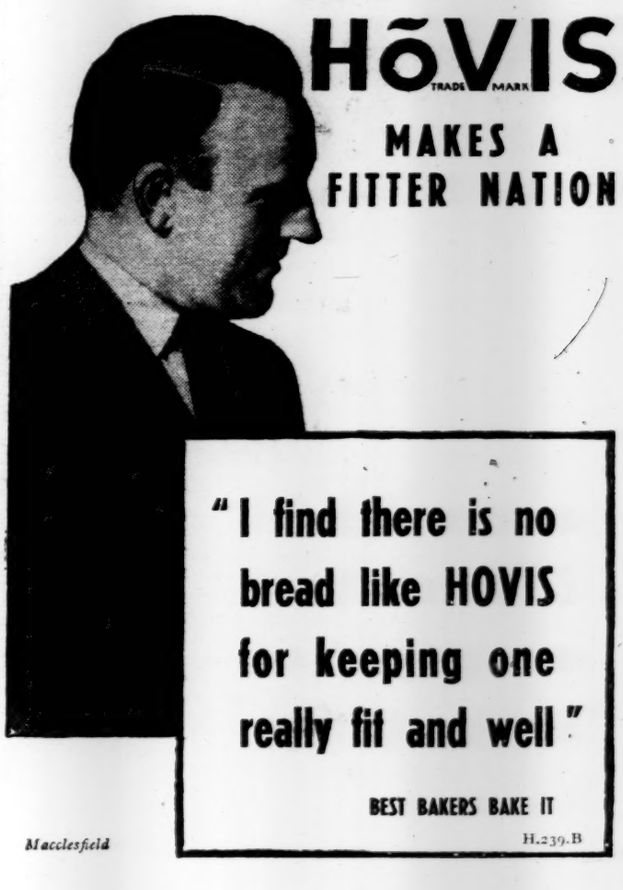
I wonder what the first Queen Elizabeth would have made of a contemporary Bolitho—whether she would have curbed her royal temper, or remembered that swords were sharp. In these days we are more lenient ; it is His Majesty's Printers themselves who issue the book and bind it in gleaming gold.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

BLUM

Léon Blum. By GEOFFREY FRASER and THADÉE NATANSON. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

We have never known of a book that contained such a mixture —or rather combination—of valuable historical information and plain drivel. Perhaps the double authorship accounts for it. But what a funny partnership the writing of this book must have been ! The first two-thirds of the book, covering the period from Blum's boyhood to the beginnings of the Front Populaire, make an accurate and straightforward story. The author of most of this is, apparently, M. Natanson, an old friend of the Blum family, who had closely followed Léon's progress over a long period of years. Some forty years ago Natanson himself was editor of the *Revue Blanche*, one of the highbrow papers of the time, to which Blum, then a fashionable young man about town, used to contribute bad poems, bad short stories, and good literary and theatrical criticism, as well as notes on racing—a subject for which he had acquired an interest under the influence of his friend, Tristan Bernard, the well known humorist. At school, the son of the Jewish ribbon manufacturer in the Faubourg St. Denis took all the prizes ; in his early twenties he became a lion of the literary and theatrical society of Paris, and used to shine in the left-wing salon of Mme. de Caillavet, together with Anatole France and other celebrities ; " petit Bob," as he was known at the time, seemed a typical *fin-de-siècle* product of the French " naughty nineties " ; and his intellectual attitude was *anarchisant* rather than Socialist. In those days, he must have been an intolerable snob ; a fault which he never quite overcame, even to this day. Until the war Blum continued the life of a " social figure," dividing his energy between literary work and his job at the Conseil d'Etat. And although, intellectually, he came—especially during the Dreyfus affair, which, naturally, touched him to the quick—under the influence of Jaurès, and began to take a mild interest in politics, he was still more at home with duchesses and theatrical highbrows than with the proletariat. He was the theatre critic of the *Matin* for many years, and ranked among the three or four leading critics in Paris. Once he fought a duel with Pierre Weber, one of whose plays he had " slated." It was not until after the assassination of Jaurès in 1914 that Blum actually entered politics—by a back door, namely, as *chef de cabinet* to Marcel Sembat, a Socialist member of the first war coalition cabinet. During the war he watched politics closely, but without taking any very active part in them. He kept rather aloof from the war-time struggles between the *majoritaires* and *minoritaires*, and preferred to study the inner workings of parliament ; the outcome of these studies was a little book which, with its criticism of the Senate, for instance, is still of topical interest to-day. Fully equipped for his task, Blum entered parliament in 1919, and soon became the virtual leader of the Socialist Party, then only a small group of 64. In the *bleu-horizon* Chamber, with its overwhelming Millerand-Poincaré majority, the opposition was weak, and it was sorely in need of a man like Blum, with his sharp, keen logic and remarkable dialectical gifts. There was no more destructive critic than Blum of the post-war euphoria (*l'Allemagne paiera*) into which France had sunk, or of the dangerous Ruhr policy of M. Poincaré. It was also Blum who, after the split at Tours, where the majority of the Socialists had gone Communist, worked hardest at restoring the Socialist Party to its former position. The Party organ, the *Humanité*, had been surrendered to the Communists, and Blum played the leading part in endowing the Party with a new paper, the *Populaire*, of which he became editor. His leading articles, which he wrote daily until he became Premier in 1936, were little masterpieces of concise and impeccably plastic writing—though rigidly doctrinaire at times. Without being revolutionary in temperament—and in this, at any rate, he differed from his master, Jaurès—he continually rejected, between 1920 and 1937, all offers of Socialist participation in Radical Governments ; for he took the view that the Socialists must, unlike the German Social-Democrats, refrain from power without real leadership. To this extent, at any rate, was Blum " anti-reformist " ; and sometimes he was, indeed, unduly uncompromising, and much too hard on the Radicals ; and his overthrow of the Daladier Government in October, 1933,



was a cardinal error which, by smashing the Left majority, prepared the way for the grave crisis of French democracy in February, 1934.

Most of these developments in Blum's political career are well described in the book; and thanks no doubt to M. Natanson's intimate knowledge of Blum's environment it also contains some interesting information on Blum's family circle and on his relations with various people, particularly with the Berthelot family, of whom Philippe was to become, for many years, the Vansittart of the Quai d'Orsay, and Blum's principal source of international enlightenment.

All this is well told, and intelligently told. But when we come to the chapters dealing with events after 1933 we enter into a thick fog of woolliness and incoherence. One feels as if these chapters had been written by somebody who had vaguely heard a few slogans, and had picked up a few odd bits of information, and had tried to piece it all together. Thus, the author seems to have vaguely heard something about M. Doumergue's béret; and, putting two and two together, he produces the following explanation of Doumergue's fall:

> When M. Doumergue chose to wear in public the Basque cap that M. Casimir de la Rocque [and Casimir is not his name, anyway] had popularised among his Fascist "troops," the cup overflowed. The Radical Ministers began to have qualms. The Doumergue Ministry foundered in a sea of ridicule.

This is powerfully put. But what brought down Doumergue was not his "Basque cap," but the grave constitutional conflict between himself and Tardieu on the one hand, and the Radicals and the Senate on the other—a conflict which lasted two months, but of which the author of this chapter seemed completely unaware. The Doumergue Government resigned on November 8th; and the famous *béret basque* episode did not take place until three days later.

Similarly, the author tells us with superb irony that

> M. Flandin's gifts had apparently not appeared to M. Doumergue sufficient to include him in his Ministry of All the Talents.

In fact, M. Flandin was M. Doumergue's Minister of Public Works.

In the same way, we are told, with magnificent sarcasm:

> Flandin's only merit, and it must not be underrated, is that for the eight months his Ministry lasted, he saved France from the disadvantage of having M. Laval at the Quai d'Orsay.

Good for old man Flandin! Only, as it happens, Laval was his Foreign Minister.

Need one go on? The rest is much in the same vein. And when facts, even wrong facts, run short, the author seems to feel that he can always fall back on belly-aching about something; he does not tell us one comprehensible thing about Blum's policy; he just belly-aches about Fascists, or about the 200 families, or about capitalism in general.

The book is described on the jacket as "the only authorised biography," but since then Mr. Gollancz has sent out circulars saying that there was some mistake, and that Blum had not read the book, which presumably means that it was not authorised. We can see Blum, with his love of precision, and his meticulous care for facts and details and fine shades, "authorising" these last chapters!

A. B.

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The Menace of the Clouds. By AIR-COMMODORE L. E. O. CHARLTON. *Hodge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Air War: Its Technical and Social Aspects. By W. O'D. PIERCE. *Watts.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Books of this kind find out the holes in one's threadbare idealism as one puts it on for Christmas Eve. I suppose they must be written; I suppose everyone but an ostrich ought to read them; and I suppose their only competent reviewers would be various gentlemen engaged in working out the new strategies of attack and defence, the very gentlemen whose first business it is to say nothing, however furiously the Charltons may rage. The curve of the world's madness drops ever more steeply. You plot the last-known point on it; the game is then to guess into what pit the next point will fall. Mr. Charlton, who has some claims to the title of Catfish Number One in the National Tank of Unpreparedness, is the major exponent of discontinuity in this guessing game of strategy. According to him, we may just as well throw the old curve into the waste-paper basket and start again a good deal further down. He is (as befits his theme) a curiously ugly, powerful writer. His ink seems to be constantly impeded by foreign bodies, but suddenly it runs out to a clear, stabbing gall, as in this comment on British foreign policy: "Are we to recede perpetually until the very wall against which we must finally put our backs is overborne by the pressure of our retreat?"

I think he is shouting the odds for pure air power rather too loudly. It is possible to be too completely fascinated by the appalling initiative of the bomber, to shove battleships and mechanised armies too contemptuously on the scrap heap, to allow the secret workers on air defence too little annotation of the now almost mystic saying, "the bomber will always get through." Mr. Charlton's case for complete discontinuity is ably argued, but until we get the final demonstration that occidental man is as vile as his warlike inventions, I take it to be not proven. Still, it is just as well to allow him his vision of the next war: (1) a first round smash up before the navies and the armies have had time to get their steam up and their boots on, and (2) subsequent rounds, if any, in which merchant and warships will be largely at the mercy of the bombers. One can then, removing Geneva from the map of the world, look at it under his guidance and see much to one's disadvantage. In teaching this new strategic geography he has a simple, deadly trick. You choose a reasonable bomber range, say 1,000 miles, draw circles of this radius round every point of strategic value, and work out in detail the relation of your vital centres and trade routes to the enemy's strategic territory as thus defined. A lot of things then happen. The innocuous, romantic blue void of the Pacific becomes red with complicated threats: Mr. Charlton is very good indeed in sketching Japan's strategic position *vis-à-vis* America and the U.S.S.R., although of course he is already out of date in China. Nearer home he is even more instructive. He explodes the fallacy that two states are equal in air power if they build bomber for bomber of equal useful load. Air parity depends entirely on the disposition of the vital centres of one in relation to the air bases of the other, as he exemplifies in ramming home the British-German inequality. Finally, and here his historical summary and strategical analysis are brilliant, he shows how the developing Mediterranean situation gnaws at the vitals of the British Empire. He argues that Italy,

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Company Meeting

CARRERAS, LTD.

RECORD YEAR.

THE thirty-fourth annual general meeting of Carreras, Ltd., was held in London on Monday last.

Mr. Edward S. Baron (chairman and managing director), presiding, extended a welcome to the three new members of the Board who were appointed early this year—Mr. William Codrington, Sir Francis Humphrys and Mr. Mark Patrick—and continuing said (in part):—The accounts show a net profit of £1,351,596, which constitutes a new record in the history of this company. This is struck after making ample provision for depreciation on machinery, buildings, and other items, and after writing off all charges, including the full amount of advertising. Adding the amount brought forward from last year, £808,846, to this year's profit, there is an available balance of £2,212,062. Your directors feel that it is prudent to propose a further allocation of £50,000 to the Contingencies Fund, making it £200,000. They also propose allocating £15,000 to the Female Pensions Fund. After deducting the allocations mentioned, and the contribution to the Staff Superannuation Fund, also the provision for Income Tax and the National Defence Contribution, the Preference Share Dividends and the Interim Ordinary Dividends, the accounts show an undivided profit of £1,587,709. We propose that the dividends for the year on ordinary, "A" ordinary and "B" ordinary shares should be at the rate of 35 per cent., of which 15 per cent. was paid in June; the balance to be carried forward to the accounts of the current year will be £1,026,671.

Both our Home and Export sales have shown an increase during this year, and by the maintenance of the high quality of our productions, fullest value to the consumer, and a progressive sales policy, I see no reason why we should not continue to enjoy a fair share of consumption, which is still showing a reasonable increase both at home and abroad. In the Home trade, competition continues to be no less than in the past, but I think we can claim to have obtained at least our fair share of the market, and we shall make every effort to continue to do so. Our 20,000 shareholders can do a lot to assist by enquiring for our various brands and seizing every opportunity to widen their distribution.

I am pleased to inform you that since the commencement of our new financial year our sales show an increase over the corresponding period last year and, providing nothing unforeseen occurs, your directors feel confident of the future. The report was unanimously adopted.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. Housemaster. Mats., Daily.
AMBASSADORS. Yes & No. Tu., Fri., & 27.
APOLLO. People at Sea. Mon., Sat.
CAMBRIDGE. It's You I Want. Th., Sat.
COLISEUM. St. Moritz. Daily, 2.30.
COMEDY. Think of a Number Tues., Fri.
DRURY LANE. Crest of the Wave. Wed., Sat.
DUCHESS. Time and the Conways. W. & S.
DUKE of YORK'S. Black Limelight. W., Sat.
GLOBE. "Robert's Wife" Wed. and Sat.
HIPPODROME. "Hide and Seek." Th. & S.
H' MAJESTY'S. Balalaika. Box Dy. Wed. & Sat.
KINGSWAY. The Great Levante. Dly.
LYRIC. Victoria Regina. Wed. & Thurs.
QUEEN'S. The School for Scandal. Wed. & Sat.
ROYALTY. I Have Been Here Before. Th., S.
ST. MARTIN'S. Autumn. Tues., Fri.
SAVOY. Treasure Island. Mats. only.
SHAFTESbury. Thank You, Mr. Pepys. Sat.
ST. JAMES'S. Boxing Day and Thurs. and Sat.
"You Can't Take it With You"
STRAND. Room Service. Thurs. & Box. Dy.
VICT. PAL. Busman's Honeymoon. Mats. only
WHITEHALL. I Killed the Count. 27 & W., S.
WYNDHAM'S. George & Margaret. W., S.

OPERA & BALLET

SCALA. Commencing Boxing Day, at 2.30.
NIGHTLY at 8.15. Matinees THURS. & SATS.
VIENNA SINGING BOYS
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THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. 6404.
No perf. Dec. 23, 24, from Dec. 27, Dly, 2.30, 8.30.
HOUSEMASTER
A Farcical Comedy by IAN HAY.

AMBASSADORS. (Tem. 1171.) Evgs. 8.30.
Mats. Tu., Fri. (ex. 24th), 2.30. Also Boxing Day 2.30.
Kenneth Horne's Laughing Success
YES AND NO

APOLLO. (Ger. 2663.)
Evgs. 8.30. Mats. Mon., Sat., 2.30.
ALEC L. REA presents
PEOPLE AT SEA, by J. B. PRIESTLEY.

CAMBRIDGE. (Tem. 6056.) 8.30. Thur., Sat., 2.30.
Extra Matinees, Dec. 27 and 28. No Perf. Xmas Eve.
SEYMOUR HICKS in
IT'S YOU I WANT

COLISEUM, Charing X. Tem. 3161 (7 lines).
2.30 and 8.15 DAILY
ST. MORITZ
A NOVEL REAL ICE MUSICAL SPECTACLE.

COMEDY. 8.30. Tu., Fri., 2.30. Ext. Mats. Bxng. Day.
Dec. 29, 30. & Jan. 1, 2.30. No Perf. Xmas Eve.
DOUGLAS BYNG, WINIFRED SHOTTER in
THINK OF A NUMBER

DRURY LANE. 8.15. Mats. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
Extra Mat. Boxing Day (Dec. 27) 2.30
IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON,
MARIE LOHR in
CREST OF THE WAVE.

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) No perf. Tonight.
Ex. Mat. Boxing Day, 2.30. Evgs. 8.30. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON in J. B. Priestley's
TIME AND THE CONWAYS

DUKE OF YORK'S. Temple Bar 5122. Evgs., 8.30
Matinees, Wed., Sat. and Boxing Day, 2.30.
MARGARET RAWLINGS in
BLACK LIMELIGHT

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Mat., Wed., Sat. and Boxing Day, 2.30 sharp.
ROBERT'S WIFE
By ST. JOHN ERVINE.

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Thurs. and Sats. at 2.30. Extra Mats., Dec. 27 & 29.
BOBBY HOWES and CICELY COURTNEIDGE
in "HIDE AND SEEK"

HIS MAJESTY'S. (Whi. 6606.) EVGS., 8.15.
BALALAIKA A Musical Play.
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THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

ROYALTY. (Ger. 7331.) Evgs., 8.30. Thurs., Sat., 2.30. Extra Matinee Boxing Day. No Perf. Xmas Eve.
I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE
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ST. JAMES'S. Whi. 3903. Evgs. 8.30.
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as the air power on the spot, already has the whip-hand in the eastern Mediterranean, and that Spanish non-intervention will give her control of its western gate and provide Portugal with a pretty seat on the Rome-Berlin axis. In that case, if war comes, Italy will close the Mediterranean; and the Azores, Madeira and the Canaries will be used as bombing nests to stop Britain's divested food-ships and France's native troops as they come up from the west coast of Africa.

And then Mr. Charlton thinks it is time to stop and put Geneva back on the map. Idle, he says, to prate of disarmament until you give the ravening Powers a workable form of security-insurance and let them prove that the premiums deliver the goods: what we want is an Article 16 with automatic and efficient claws. And so we get a 1937 model of the International Air Force, completely autonomous and self-contained, at a cost of less than £100 million a year, recruited in equal quotas from the contracting Powers. At the word Go from a Council of Equity composed of highly disinterested eldest statesmen of Europe, who, situated somewhere above the League Council, would name the aggressor, this force would set off from its base at Tunis and smash him. Yes, but . . . yes, but . . . yes, but. . . . I said—and then, remembering the season, I parted from Mr. Charlton with the reflection that the Prince of Peace could in truth come in even stranger guise than the denationalised Marshal of Tunis.

The second book on this list suffers from beginning at the beginning in a laudable effort to say a little about everything in aviation for half a crown. I met again my old aeronautical friends Icarus, Daedulus, Leonardo da Vinci and the rest, when I would rather have spent more time with my much more realistic contemporaries and their beautiful but hellish contraptions. Yet this little book is exceptional value. It is written by one who, besides being clearly expert in the technical achievement and potentialities of aeronautics, has his own notion of what it is beside petrol which is driving the bombers faster and farther over our unprotected heads. He may be right and he may be wrong, but at least he gives a lucid and concise Marxism sketch of the economic situation, whereas Mr. Charlton only writes a lot of loose stuff about historical development along "lines of force," whatever they may be. The strategical and tactical analysis in this book is of course slighter, but it goes a long way, and very persuasively, along Mr. Charlton's road. The author knows also something of the dilemma of the man who can't live without making things work but finds that he is only allowed to make them work to kill: "The independent scientist at work for the sheer joy of discovery has practically disappeared. The growth of technique itself has made the team-work of experts essential for modern scientific progress. Technical experiments cost money, and money comes only from governments or competitive industry. They are an unhappy lot, these research workers and technicians. Their training and employment develop a critical attitude of mind. They cannot refrain from researching into their own functions. They would like to find that they are serving humanity; they find instead that they are contributing their little quotas to the perfection of improved engines of destruction. The pacifist devising bombs is truly a pitiable person?

Too true!

BARRINGTON GATES

SHORTER NOTICES

French Introspectives. By P. MANSELL JONES. *Cambridge.* 6*s.*

This little book consists of a series of short studies of the introspective qualities of Montaigne, Maine de Biran, Sénancour, the Romantic poets, and Amiel, and seeks to find a definition of "pure" introspection from the examination of these authors' motives. No writers of other nations are considered, directly religious experiences are excluded, and so are those autobiographies (e.g. Rousseau's *Confessions*) the object of which is obviously apologetic. Now there is room for a considerable treatise on Autobiography and the various forms it has taken; but it would seem that the nature of the subject demands exhaustive treatment; thus the value of a narrowly limited, exclusive one, such as is here attempted, is more than doubtful, particularly as the limits adopted are so arbitrary. At least a third of Maine de Biran's *Journal*, which Mr. Mansell Jones rightly regards as of immense importance and considers at length, consists of religious speculations; but to arrive at the root of the matter it would be necessary to compare his experience with that of such writers as St. Augustine and Newman. But if Mr. Mansell Jones is right in contending that the object of all pure introspection is to grasp the true form of the Me, *sub specie aeternitatis*, then he has done well to insist on the paramount interest of Amiel and Maine de Biran, and to dismiss Montaigne finally as not a "true" introspective in this sense. In fact, there are so many acute and stimulating things scattered through the book that one cannot help regretting that its author has not seen fit to widen its scope. One may also regret, but can scarcely deny, that "pure" introspection is necessarily a morbid symptom, being the catharsis practised by those for whom living has proved an unmanageable business. For this reason, as Mr. Mansell Jones points out, it will always remain more or less distasteful to well co-ordinated persons, who rightly feel that perpetual self-analysis inevitably leads to paralysis of action, which must always be the result of "global" emotion. At the same time, the extreme difficulty of adequate introspection—that of keeping the eye firmly fixed on the subject—is too often underestimated, for "the enemy of sustained introspection is the day-dream." For this reason, humanity owes a constant debt to even so sluggish a seeker after God as Amiel, who, being betrayed by what was false within, could not but fail in his quest; yet such a failure can be productive and "those who approach Amiel through his Journal may discover far more variety in his knowledge than in his mind." Maurice de Guérin, a far less pretentious soul, came nearer to success, and we should be grateful to Mr. Mansell Jones for drawing our attention back to the *Cahier Vert*. Sénancour is another matter; he was not out for the truth in the sense that Maine de Biran was, and it seems fair to relegate *Obermann* to the sphere of poetry, where it will always retain a place apart, ignored by the many but cherished by the few who find in romantic pessimism a sufficient alleviation to the pain of living. One cannot respect Sénancour, though one may love him; whereas all must respect Maine de Biran and to some extent Amiel, for neither seek our pity. Montaigne seeks it even less and gains thereby the suffrage of the more balanced minds.

A Dictionary of British History. Edited by J. A. BRENDON. *Arnold.* 15*s.*

This is a useful book to have beside one when one cannot remember the detail of a familiar historical event, person, act of parliament, ecclesiastical dispute, etc. Wherever Englishmen have been abroad a bit of English history lies, etc., so that the scope of the dictionary is moderately wide. To expect a book of this kind to embody the most advanced historical views, would, perhaps, be as absurd as to expect an ordinary dictionary to be a philosophy, so one mustn't grumble. But a little heresy, like a little wit in a definition, would make it so much more pleasant to recommend the book.

About Motoring

THE 25 H.P. VAUXHALL

DURING this year I have owned and driven a 25 h.p. Vauxhall, listed at £298 and taxed at £18 15*s.* It belongs to a class of car not manufactured in this country until the last year or two, and possessed of rather special interest as planned to furnish comparatively poor owners with the amenities of large car travel. These amenities have been the privilege of the lower middle classes in the United States for many years past for three special reasons. First, the enormous output possible in America permitted such cars to be marketed at absurdly low prices; the prices look low in dollars, and have actually been much lower than they look, because wages are high, so that a ridiculously small number of working hours enabled an American citizen to buy such a car. Secondly, the motor taxation in the States is far lower than ours. Thirdly, the price of petrol or "gas" is also much lower. It follows that if an American citizen could manage the initial purchase by cash or credit, he could run the car on the same weekly outlay which a baby car demanded in this country. Some few years ago the impecunious British motorist made the acquaintance of these large, cheap American cars, and found they compared most favourably in all the sensations of use with the small British cars which had previously been his sole purchases. Then our Government reduced the tax a little, and emboldened him to experiment with an imported American six of 16 to 25 h.p. Our roads began to display an increasing number of these large cheap cars. The British industry took the hint, and a number of British factories began to design and build similar cars, of which the 25 h.p. Vauxhall is a fine example. Its tax, of course, is high for a man of modest means. Its fuel consumption is high also—even on long cross-country journeys it does not register better than 20 miles per gallon, and in town work with frequent stops it may not cover more than seventeen miles on a gallon. Its selection or rejection by a given owner is merely a question of whether he appreciates large car motoring sufficiently to face such financial sacrifices; and the vast numbers of big American sixes and of their British rivals, the "supersixes" of Morris, Wolseley, and the rest, indicate very forcibly that many people consider the extravagance is amply justified. If we compare the behaviour of such cars with the really expensive big cars, the contrast is two-

fold. The opulent twenties, catalogued at £750 or over, cost a great deal more to buy; cost no more to run, and possess a refinement and polish of road manners which the cheaper cars cannot quite equal. But the cheaper twenty does all that a reasonable human being can demand, and goes on doing it indefinitely. There is a difference of manner; there may be a small difference in ultimate performance, measured against watch and distance; but there is no contrast in reliability. The Vauxhall has not given me one mite of trouble apart from a faulty trip mechanism in its speedometer; and I know of a dozen others, some driven by commercial men who cover their 25,000 miles in twelve months, and all of them display similar records.

When such a car is pitted against its smaller and cheaper predecessors, various differences emerge in the mind. The first is that of comfort. This Vauxhall is beautifully sprung, and a couple of hundred miles reeled off in one piece at speed entail no physical exhaustion even for an elderly driver; the car has travelled from Brighton to Falmouth in eight hours, and its five occupants stepped out perfectly fresh at their destination. There are no detail bothers of any kind—nothing comes loose, no plugs soot or oil—the car runs as reliably as a train. This comfort is based mainly on really excellent springing, which enables the crew to ignore ordinarily bad roads without the precaution of dropping the speed; and if the front springing is soft, it is quite firm enough for fast bends to be taken quickly—the steering is definite. In another aspect, the enhanced comfort as compared with a small car, depends partly on the spacing of the occupants. No warm bodies press against each other to communicate heat; the driver's left elbow is not discommoded by contact with the passenger on the other front seat. The brakes are superb, and demand no attention. During nearly a full year of hard work the foot brake has never once been taken up, and the hand brake once only—it is never used except for parking purposes, though in precise adjustment it is really powerful.

The engine is an extremely modern power unit, and miraculous value at the price. It starts immediately in any weather. It attends to its own temperature quite infallibly, and is ready for work as soon as it starts. It will tool the big car along under full load on top gear at well under 20 m.p.h. and on the same gear does not proclaim its existence at any speed between 15 and 40 m.p.h. It can probably touch 80 m.p.h. when given its head, but at speeds over 60 m.p.h. the car begins to be noisy by comparison with the £1,000 twenties, though it is difficult to gauge how far the uproar at high speeds is mechanical, and how far it is created by disturbed air currents. Apparently little attempt has been made to silence the "wind roar" characteristic of all except the very best modern cars at 70 m.p.h. and over. The hill-climbing on top gear is so greedy that downward changes for gradient are extremely rare in the home counties. Third gear is extraordinarily useful, safeguarding overtaking, bestowing additional acceleration, and commanding all ordinary hills where conditions prevent a fierce rush on top gear. Second and first gear are hardly ever used; second is noisy—another symptom that the car is cheap for its size, but the noise is high-pitched and on freak hills along by-roads offers no obstruction to conversation. Synchro-mesh is provided for the changes from second upwards, and is entirely effective; the changes between first and second are apt to scrape unless carefully executed.

Unlike certain imported cars, the lamps are unusually efficient. On a clear road at night the headlamps permit the full speed of the car to be used with safety. In the anti-dazzle position, the lighting is better than that of many cars at double the price. The reverse lamp destroys all anxiety in backing at close quarters by darkness. The sidelamps have tiny red panels inset in their tails, so that it is impossible for a bulb to fail in traffic without the driver discovering the fact in a few minutes.

All maintenance details are readily accessible with the solitary exception of the rear shock absorbers. Decarbonisation should not be necessary for at least 10,000 miles. The finish of both body and metal fittings is good, and ordinary attention prevents the car from becoming shabby after a short life, an imputation from which some cheap American cars are by no means exempt. It is hardly possible to find fault with the car as a whole, or with any of its details; and there seems to be no reason why it should not function admirably for a hundred thousand miles.

R. E. DAVIDSON

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

MARKETS AND BUSINESS—SOME KAFFIR POSSIBILITIES—COMPANY LAW REFORM

SOMETHING like cheerfulness is returning to Wall Street. The majority of brokers' letters and circulars I read have actually begun to express a cautious optimism. Here is one example—in the strange language peculiar to professional market commentators: "After the tremendous fall of the autumn a slow sideways market with alternate minor fluctuations about a mean level contains more promise of stabilisation and eventual recovery than a rapid advance. This is the kind of market we are now having. It seems not unreasonable to suppose it is laying the basis for a January rally of more than technical proportions." In other words, the market is ignoring bad economic statistics—the bottom of the present industrial decline will probably not be reached before January or February—and is being influenced by broad political trends. It is being cheered by the revolt of Congress against the President and by the defeat of Mr. Roosevelt on the Wages and Hours Bill. It is also taking encouragement at the prospect of great rearmament expenditure. In this mood it will pass over the appalling deflation caused by the too rapid reduction in Government expenditures and the unwillingness of utilities and railroads to undertake the risks of capital expenditure without a definite Government lead. The keynotes of the market to-day are—Mr. Roosevelt is on the run, Congress and the Adminstration are becoming more conservative and "God's own country" will have to rearm in answer to the Japanese. What the keynotes of the market to-morrow will be I dare not guess, but all this goes to show that Wall Street has become entirely mental. For practically it has to be admitted that the economic background to the investment Christmas tree consists more of snow than faery lights. So far as this country is concerned, the November figure of building plans approved makes a disagreeable impression. Not merely is the total decline large—13.5 per cent. as compared with a year ago—but there is a significant drop in the value of plans approved for factories and workshops. If private enterprise is going to draw in its horns at this rate, it will take more than Sir Thomas Inskip's prophecies of still expanding armaments demand to make good the deficiency. The fall in Cables and Wireless receipts is also depressing. Some observers of the U.S.A. profess to see indications that curtailment of output has outrun the fall in consumption, and that stocks are approaching a level at which replacement orders must soon begin to re-quicken the wheels. This may be true of some lines of manufactured goods, but it is much less certainly proved in the case of primary products.

* * *

In commenting upon the "Kaffir" dividends last week I mentioned Crown Mines as perhaps the safest gold investment for the private investor. For the institutional and scientific investor, who can set up theoretical sinking funds for amortisation, the shares of companies with relatively short lives, such as Geduld, New State Areas, Government Gold Mining Areas and Van Ryn Deep, may possess greater, if more speculative, attractions. The following table gives the running yields at present market prices of the "short-life" shares mentioned :—

	Present Price	Divs. June.	Divs. Dec.	Div. Yield.†	Est. Life Years.
Short Life.					
Geduld £1	9 9/16	7/6	7/6	£8 19 0	5*
New State Areas, £1	3	3/–	3/–	£11 7 9	18
Govt. Areas, 5/– ..	1 7/16	2/3	2/3	£17 17 0	12
Van Ryn Deep, £1 ..	1½	2/6	2/6	£19 0 0	10

* The company's own mine has a prospective life of about 15 years; but of the Company's main investments, the East Geduld property should have a life of some 40 years, while the Grootvlei mine has not yet reached the production stage.

† Equivalent gross, after allowing for approximate Dominion Income Tax relief.

Whether they incline to short- or long-life mines most investors now consider that the shares of the actual gold producers are preferable to those of the finance holding companies. Inactive market conditions do not give much scope for profitable jobbing or for the new flotations which bring such large "finance" profits to the holding companies. Nevertheless, the market was well satisfied with the dividend of the Anglo-American Corporation, which is paying 4s. a share against 3s. in December 1936. The yields obtainable on the leading finance shares are shown in the next table.

	Price.	Dividends June.	Dividends Dec.	Div. Yields.†
Anglo-American Corp., 10/–	3 1/16	—	4/–	£7 5 3
Jo'berg Cons. Investment, £1	3¼	—	4/- Sept.	£6 16 9
Consolidated Goldfields, £1 ..	3 13/16	1/3	2/9	*£5 9 3
Union Corporation, 12/6 ..	7¾	6/–	2/6	£5 17 0

* In addition, a special "Jubilee" dividend of 2/6 per share was paid in March, 1937.

† Equivalent gross, after allowing for approximate Dominion Income Tax relief.

Union Corporation shares have not quite recovered the fall which followed upon their recent issue of new shares at £7. I still regard these shares as the least speculative of the finance houses.

* * *

The House of Commons has now recorded its view that early legislation is desirable to reform the Companies Act, but action in this sense by the Government appears to be a remote possibility. A Bill is definitely promised to curb the activities of share-pushers—though it is to be feared that it will follow the lines of the faint-hearted Bodkin Report—and the Government "hopes" to deal with the flagrant abuse of the Provident Society Acts by concerns promoted to deal in real estate. But Company Law reform apparently must wait. It is arguable that nearly all the forms of financial fraud practised to-day on the public consist of operations outside that Act; but in two respects the Act undoubtedly needs tightening up. It is still possible, without serious risk of prosecution, to issue a prospectus or offer for sale in which material facts—e.g., relating to contracts—are omitted and estimates of future earnings are compiled on a basis which is misleading. It is still possible to publish accounts of holding companies which give shareholders no information worth having about the aggregate profits and assets of the subsidiaries on whose fortunes their investment depends. The need for stricter prospectus requirements and for a consolidated balance sheet and profit and loss account in the case of every holding company is indisputable and urgent. It is difficult to justify the reluctance of the Government to follow Parliament's lead.

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Entered as second-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office, 1928. Printed in Great Britain for the Proprietors by The Cornwall Press Ltd., Paris Garden, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1; Published Weekly at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.